



**An Investigation into the true drivers of Employee
Engagement. A case study within the Aviation
Industry.**

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Abstract

This research project was aimed at investigating the true drivers of Employee Engagement; these were then tested in Company X within the Aviation Industry. The second aim of this project was to investigate the levels of engagement across different roles within Company X. This was measured across, Clerical, Operative and cabin Crew.

This literature review found there were seven main drivers to employee engagement. The researcher investigated these drivers through one to one interviews with 15 members of staff across the three roles stated previously. The study found that within the sample there were thirteen out of the fifteen were engaged. There were two disengaged employees both from the Operative job category.

The study also found that out of the seven main drivers there were three that were head strong facilitators for engagement levels at Company X. This study proved that it is possible for employees to be engaged at work even if the main facilitators coined by academics as important are not in fact present. The research puts forward the idea that there are certain components to employee engagement and that they do not all have to be present in order to have an engaged workforce.

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Chapter One

1.0 Introduction

HR practitioners and scholars make note of the importance of employee engagement to an organisation, Guest (2000) discusses how the ‘human capital’ or employees of an organisation are a non replaceable entity that when it is focused upon and attention is paid and given to it that it can help increase the organisations competitive advantage. MacLeod and Clarke (cited in Sambrook, Jones and Doloriert, 2013) also state that employee engagement was offered as an answer for organisations in the search for sustainable economic growth in the financial crisis of 2008. Barnes and Collier (2013) argue the same message as MacLeod and Clarke in that employee engagement has a strong connection with the positive outcomes for the organisation such as customer loyalty and customer satisfaction. Barnes and Collier (2013) make this point also by stating that work engagement is positively related to career commitment. It is clear from these few extracts from articles on employee engagement that it is considered very important in an organisation across different authors. This also brings the importance of employee engagement to light and why the researcher felt that examining its drivers would be of academic importance.

Employee engagement is a generally new phenomenon in the business world, first being coined by Kahn (1990) as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances.”(Kahn, 1990, p.694). Mone, Eisinger, Guggenheim, Price and Stine (2011) define employee engagement as the employees who feel passionately committed and empowered by working for the organisation and this comes through in their work. The definition by Kahn (1990) and Mone et al (2011) shows how employees express themselves in the workplace positively because of how they feel about the organisation. This hones in the point the first paragraph made about the importance and outstanding effect that employee engagement has on an organisation.

This research projects main aim was to test the main drivers of employee engagement to see if they are as dominant as expressed in the literature. The researcher chose to investigate this because after thorough reading of past literature they found there to be a gap in the literature for studies performed across different job roles as Kular, S Gatenby, M Rees, C, Soane, E and Truss, K. (2008) confirm by saying that it would be worthwhile for a study to be performed across different job roles in relation to personal engagement. The researcher has a history in the aviation industry and was intrigued to measure engagement across a world renowned airline. For confidentiality and privacy purposes the aviation company will be referred to throughout this thesis as Company X. Company X was particularly appealing to investigate as it a main operator across Europe and is a popular feature on the news most weeks.

Company X is a large airline based in Europe, they have been a feature piece on the news frequently over the past few years about their management style and how the airline is run currently. The overall assumption is that the engagement levels at this airline would be quiet low, this intrigued the researcher to pursue Company X to measure the levels of engagement across this organisation and into the different job categories which are: Clerical (boarding staff, check in agents, general customer care on the ground), Operative (operating on the ramp where the aircrafts are such a baggage handling) and Cabin Crew (airhostesses). There have been previous studies into employee engagement in an attempt to measure it, diagnose it, define it and inevitably understand it. In an organisations struggle to achieve productivity and growth they need to ensure that their employees are consistently engaged with their work, the organisation and the passengers

1.1 Layout of the Research Project

This research project will have six chapters; the layout of this research project will be as follows;

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter introduces the reader to the area that has been studied and examined. It lays out the context in which the research was carries out and justifies the means for this research. It also gives a brief background on Company X where the research was conducted.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter will review the relevant relatable past literature to the topic. It will take the reader through the importance of employee engagement, leading in to the definitions that have been found, that have contributed to the components of employee engagement. The components to employee engagement are driven and facilitated by drivers and the facilitators of engagement which the researcher has identified the main seven that were dominant in the literature and also in a previous study on employee engagement by Anitha (2013). The literature review will proceed to explain the seven drivers and how they may affect engagement levels and the scholars that agree with and promote these drivers.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The methodology chapter will bring the reader through the process that the researcher went through in gathering the data. This will explain the choice between qualitative and quantitative and why qualitative was the best choice for this research. It will also explain the considered instrument tools and the researchers reasoning for choosing interviews. This chapter also includes the rationale for the questions asked, how the data was treated, and any ethical issues that arose along with the limitations to the research gathering stage.

Chapter Four: Findings

This chapter will discuss a summary of the main themes that were found from the interviews drawing on the main aims and objective of study and discussing this in light of the reviewed literature. The findings chapter also shows the main contributor to the levels of engagement in Company X was interestingly enough not one of the main drivers from the literature review but it was in fact the personal attitudes and attributes that the individual believed was there main contributor. The objectives of whether there is different levels of engagement across different roles is discussed here in where it was found that there was a lower engagement level amongst the operative job role and that cabin crew were very engaged in the role along with clerical. This proved interesting because the trust level for the organisation was shockingly low.

Chapter Five: Discussion

This chapter will draw out the main themes from the data gathered following with interview process. The researcher will then compare and contrast the literature with these findings to elaborate on the importance of the drivers of engagement and what drivers turned out to be the main drivers for Company X

Chapter Six: Conclusion/ Recommendations

The final chapter will draw conclusions from the findings of the research and suggest recommendations for company X and recommendations for further study in this field.

Chapter Two

2.0 Literature Review

The purpose of this chapter is for the researcher to examine past research from academics and practitioners on the area of Employee Engagement. The researcher used different articles and academic journals to pursue the most reliable and relevant information. In the literature review the topics are discussed under several headings such as the components and drivers of employee engagement.

This chapter will start with the opening remarks section which will bring the reader through the importance of employee engagement and the dangers of having a disengaged workplace. After emphasising the importance of engagement and discussing the dangers of disengaged workforces the chapter will continue with a section on the many definitions of employee engagement and will draw out the main components that make up a healthy engaged workforce. Continuing on the components will be discussed in more detail, leading into the main drivers that were found over literature. The seven drivers that facilitate the components are the results of a study performed by Anitha (2013), the researcher was intrigued by these drivers and although the drivers are found in Anitha's (2013) study they were also noted by other scholars in their respective works which are discussed below.

2.1 Opening Remarks on Employee Engagement

Employee Engagement has become an increasingly popular subject in working environments over the last few decades. Welbourne (cited in Wildermuth and Pauken 2008) expressed the popularity of employee engagement by stating

that it was “the hottest topic in management”. There is no simple definition for employee engagement; there is no generic, universal explanation that can sum it up perfectly. There is however a lot of literature relating to this area and in turn there are a lot of different takes on definitions. There are many similarities and many headstrong themes, many components and many drivers to employee engagement. What is clear from the literature is that scholars feel it has an extreme importance and can benefit the organisation and the employee alike.

To begin Armstrong (2009) expresses the importance of having an engaged workforce by stating that the success of today’s organisations is viewed by their ability to retain their best staff. Armstrong (2012) also expressed that an engaged employee is the staff member that will work hard to go the extra mile for their organisation. Guest, Michie and Sheehan (2000) advocates the importance of having the best human capital because it is an irreplaceable resource that when used correctly can help the organisations competitive advantage. Ogwu, Onyishi and Rodriegez-Sanchez (2013) also highlights the need for an organisation to have strong competitive advantage to succeed and clarifies that in order for the company to gain competitive advantage it needs a strong core of employees who are engaged with the companies directional goals and values and who perform at their maximum potential.

It is clear to see the importance that academics and scholars place on engaging your employees. Organisations that do not avail of the simple resources that can influence engagement will eventually lose their best staff and as a result lose competitive advantage. Employee Engagement can be achieved by small and large actions performed by the organisation and the leaders, these will be discussed in the drivers section of this chapter.

Maylett and Nielson (2012) amplify the devastating impact that an engagement imbalance can have on an organisation by describing the difference between an engaged and disengaged workforce as the difference between successful business and business failure. The dangers of not engaging your staff can be critical to some organisations. Pech and Slade (2006) describe disengaged employees as the employees who have mentally quit the organisation but still continue to work but express no effort or passion in their work. This employee would become like a black hole of negativity for the

organisation, there would be extremely low productivity and very poor quality in the work they do complete. Kahn (1990) explained that an individual who fails to fully engage in their workplace has created unemployment of the self, basically that they have no personal drive to go to work and that it is damaging to a person's health. Finally to conclude the distressing facts about disengaged employees Cataldo (2011. Pp 6) portrays a disengaged employee as "Actively disengaged workers are the most damaging employees in the workplace. They are unhappy and let that unhappiness show in words, attitudes and actions"

2.2 Definition of Employee Engagement

As stated above there is no universal definition for employee engagement, this is reconfirmed by Macey and Schneider (2008) who speculate that there have been a lot of definitions coined but a solid definition has not yet been confirmed. Buckingham and Coffman (cited in Anitha 2013) composed their understanding of employee engagement as "the right people in the right roles with the right managers drive employee engagement", Buckingham and Coffman have taken an overview of what engagement is, the researcher believes this is a clear definition but a very broad one and as the researcher digs deeper into the definition of engagement they found that there are varying opinions on the aspects required for an engaged employee. There seemed to be a level of emotional commitment along with psychological traits that academics believe are the main defining characteristics of what it means to be engaged in ones work place but also there are conditions such as the working environment, the relationships with colleagues and the relationship with their leaders that contribute to an employee's engagement levels.

McCashland (1999) defined employee engagement as an emotional reaction within the employee that was prompted by the essential components of their workplace. Howe (2003) also believes there is an emotional aspect as they summarized employee engagement as the status of emotional and mental commitment and involvement that employees have at work. Baumark (2004), Richman (2006) and Shaw (2005) also agree with this way of thinking, they

discuss how employee engagement is the emotional and intellectual commitment to the organisation.

Truss, Soane, Edwards, Wisdom, Droll and Burnett (2006) take a more psychological approach to the definition and say it is simply an enthusiasm for work. Robinson et al (2004) defines engagement as one level up from commitment and Frank et al (2004) also take the simple approach and describe engagement as optional extra effort expressed in an individual's day to day performances. As one can see the definition for employee engagement varies from author to author, they do however touch on the fact that they believe engagement levels are contributed to an emotional, intellectual and or physical commitment to the organisation.

This relates back to the most cited piece of literature in relation to employee engagement, Kahn (1990) who defined employee engagement as “the harnessing of organization members’ selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances.”(Kahn, 1990, p.694). The perfect example of this situation is an extract from Kahn (cited in Sambrook, Jones and Doloriert 2013).

“a scuba diving instructor [...] spent a great deal of time with the students both in and out of class and worked to share with them his personal philosophy about the ocean and the need to take care of its resources. In doing so, he experienced moments of pure personal engagement. He described one [...] expedition in which he employed his self physically, darting about checking gear and leading the dive; cognitively, in his vigilant awareness of divers, weather and marine life; and emotionally, in empathizing with the fear and excitement of the young divers.”

The researcher believes that this is the perfect example for Kahn's physical, cognitive and emotional expression because it shows clear examples of how someone can express themselves physically in work like the scuba diver and fixing the equipment, cognitively because they are awareness of his surroundings and is dedicated to knowing what is going on around them and emotionally because they can empathise with the new divers and their experience. In an office situation this could be seen as working hard to meet

deadlines, being aware of what your team is going through and how to best suit the resources you have and emphasising with your team members and know they are working hard towards goals too.

2.3 Components of Employee Engagement

According to the Institute of Employment Studies the components of engagement are commitment, organizational citizenship behaviour and motivation. (Armstrong, 2010) Although there has been a lot of definitions established for employee engagement there is the argument that it is very similar to Robinson, Perryman and Hayday (2004) description of organisation commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour. According to Xerri and Brunetto (2013 p. 3164) organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) “is recognised as an individual-level factor that may have a positive relationship with an organisation’s ability to successfully implement organisational strategy, as well as gain a competitive advantage” The researchers understanding of this definition is that it is an individual’s personal behaviour that can have a positive effect on the organisations strategy and therefore may increase their competitive advantage. One can see the similarities’ that could be assumed to match employee engagement because of the similar benefits that an organisation would achieve by having either engaged employees or employees who have OCB.

Macey, Schneider, Barbera and Young (2009) distinguish motivation in engagement as intrinsic and that if the work is meaningful and has value the employee is rewarded by this and not pay or other benefits. The components of employee engagement are summarised as motivation in ones workplace, the commitment one feels to the organisation and the behaviour of an employee that occurs in the workplace.

2.4 Drivers of Employee Engagement

Following on from the components, the practitioners believe that showing signs of commitment, motivation and OCB is the formula for successful employee engagement. Continuing on from what makes an employee engaged, the researcher looks into the main drivers that were discovered in their research that academics believe can drive the engagement levels to increase or decrease.

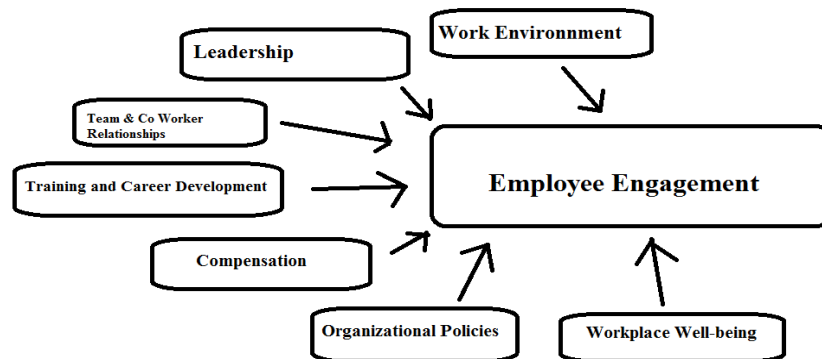
Kahn established that there are three physiological circumstances linked to the engagement and disengagement of employees; “meaningfulness, safety and availability.”(Kahn, 1990, p.703) In response to this, May, Gilson and Harter (2004) found Kahn’s findings were important regarding engagement but they also found that value in your job and feeling like you are a good fit in your job, gratifying co workers were positive prompts for engagement. The meaningfulness aspect regards the value that an individual gets from their jobs, the safety aspect is job security, is the individual secure in their job do they feel safe to act on their own intuition and the availability, how available are they for the situation.

Maslach, Schaufelli and Leiter (2001) describe an alternative measurement for engagement they believe that there are six regions of work and life that lead to engagement or disengagement; workload, perceived fairness and value, community and social support, control and rewards and recognition. They argued that employee engagement was linked to a maintainable workload, justice in the workplace along with a supportive work atmosphere, rewards and recognition where deserved, a sense of control over their roles and that they can practice valuable work. Towers Perrin (2003) study of engagement lead to the realisation that the primary elements required for engagement were an inspirational leader, the feeling of being responsible, a sense of control over your work as discussed also by Maslach et al (2001) and that there be opportunities for development. These authors are stating that in their belief for an employee to be engaged at work they have to feel like they are performing a significant job, that it helps the organisation on a significant scale. That what they do everyday has a purpose, if this is achieved then there is no need for paid rewards, they grow in themselves and develop a higher level of confidence in their job performance, which will ultimately increase productivity.

In accordance with employees understanding of ‘meaning’ in relation to employment Holbeche and Springett (2003) believe it is closely related to their engagement levels. They believe that employees are always looking for the meaning or value behind their performance and if leaders do not provide this requirement then it is likely the employee may leave. Holbeche and Springett (2003) also contend that the highest measurements of engagement will be

reached in a workplace where there are mutual interests and individuals connect on an emotional level and bond over personal aspirations. There is a natural requirement in humans that we want to be doing something worthwhile; to be able to have that recognition in your work life will lead to a blissful individual.

Although the above mentioned authors and HR practitioners make compelling points the researcher has based their drivers on the determinants and facilitators that were found by Anitha (2013) and supported by other scholars. The researcher felt that Anitha (2013) accumulated a wide variety of factors that affect engagement some of which were mentioned by the above authors, the main trailblazers seen were having a supportive workplace and have colleagues who were caring, other repeating themes were the aspect of recognition, relationships with leaders and overall fairness in the workplace. The seven determinants that were found from the study were work environment, leadership, team and co-worker relationships, training and career development, compensation, organisational policies and workplace well being. The researcher used these 7 drivers for their interview questions in the hope of discovering whether these were in fact the main drivers for employee engagement or was there something that Anitha (2013) had been looked over.



Graph based on Anitha (2013) pp.311.

2.4.1 Workplace environment

Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010) found from their study the benefits to employee engagement come from various features within the workplace. Deci

and Ryan (1987) discuss how attributes such as positive feedback on work, contingent rewards or imposed deadlines can be some of the main qualities that are seen in self determination. Deci and Ryan (1987) commend self determination along with promoting individuals to become more autonomous and by having both of these characteristics available and accessible for employees in a work place can leave a long lasting positive effect on their health.

Further to the importance of the work environment to employee's engagement levels comes the supportive factor within the workplace environment and its clear link to a successful working climate. Shuck (2010) cited in (Rana, Ardchvilli and Tkachenko 2014) stated that offering support was an incredibly beneficial for promoting a positive effect on the workplace climate. Shuck (2010) also made a recommendation to managers and superiors to create a working atmosphere that is positive and meaningful to the employee. Saks (2006) study of employee engagement proved that the assumed support from the company was a good predictor of the levels of employee and organisational engagement.

Clearly from the literature discussed above one can see the importance of a supportive work environment and the benefits that it has on the levels of engagement within an organisation. Rana, Ardchvilli and Tkachenko (2014) recognise that there are a lot of similarities between the workplace environment and the relationships between an individual's superiors and themselves and how that relationship has a strong effect on engagement levels too which brings us to the second driver, relationships with leaders.

2.4.2 Relationship and trust with leaders

The relationship between an employer and the employee is evidently important in a working organisation. The list of benefits of having positive leadership communications are discussed below, but to highlight the dangers of having a disengaged leader is emphasized by Wildermuth and Pauken (2008), they make the point that if a leader is disengaged how can an employee be expected to engage. A leader must lead by example.

Townsend and Gebhardt (2008) believe that a successful approach to employee engagement is for the organisation to appeal to both the rational and

emotional levels, that an organisation must build trust with their employees, they suggest the use of a Complete Quality Process (CQP). A CQP has seven components, “top management commitment, leadership, 100% employee involvement, communication, training, measurement and recognition.”(Townsend and Gebhardt, 2008, p.23) Similar to the other academics, Townsend and Gerhardt (2008) encourage a healthy flow of communication, recognition where appropriate, development opportunities and for top management to be committed to their employees and form a relationship or at least a rapport with them to build respect and trust. Townsend and Gerhardt (2008) note that virtually all employees call their job ‘my company’ at home, they support using that natural feeling and attempting to achieve a high level of dedication and faith in the organisation. Having a positive manager-employee relationship will build trust, Beech and Anderson (2003) state the engagement levels may be lower in an organisation where trust is low between employers and employees. If employers dedicated time to attempting to grow a trusting credibility their engagement levels would increase. Gillespie and Mann (2004) confirm this by saying that the trust between an employee and their superior leads to a long list of benefits such as improving quality of communication, problem solving and improves OCB which the researcher has already stated has similar benefits to an organisation that engagement does. Ogwu et al (2013) explain the importance of trust and its link to engagement as the Social Exchange Theory, they say that an employee is more inclined to act on positive attitude and behaviours in the workplace when a bond has been built with employers by way of the social-exchange principles.

The Ivey Business Journal (2006) stated the ten C’s of employee engagement as; “connect, career, clarity, convey, congratulate, contribute, control, collaborate, credibility and confidence.” They source engagement will increase if the employee has a successful manager-employee connection, that they have job enrichment and feel they have development opportunities. Also that there is a clear vision of where they are going personally and where the organisations directional goals are, that there can be small recognitions in day to day work on how the employee is improving or how they could stand to improve, that they feel like they have contributed something to the organisation. Employee want to know that they can create control over their

daily life, that there is trust in order to be able to work together, that they are employer proud, confident to say they work for their company and finally to be confident in their workplace and confident in their actions. Furthering on from the creditability 'C' in Ivey's concept, Luthans and Peterson (2002) deem there is a link between engagement levels and the self efficiency of managers. How a manager carries, him/herself, if they are respected, well liked and inspiring. These are aspects that can lead to an increase in engagement levels.

It is a world recognised concept that communicating can improve most situations for the better; it can also drive engagement forward. A CIPD report (2006) proposed that effective communication is a key driver in engaging employees in the workplace especially if it comes from a senior member of staff. Simons (2011) also embodied this theory of communication and supported that two way communication channels from employees to managers were a key driver in engaging employees. Powis (2012) installed a continuous communication aspect in her organisation which allowed a free flow between managers and employees, sharing knowledge and opinions, she also set up a employee engagement group (EEG) which would gather a few times a year and express any issues they were having, or if any employees were having trouble, this would be communicated to senior level management through the EEG and then feedback was given back through the group. The extracts from these practitioners and academics is emphasizing the importance of communication in organisations and the positive effects that it can result in.

2.4.3 Co-Worker relationships

Anitha (2013) promotes an open and supportive work environment is vital in order for employees to have a sense of security at work and with this feeling of safety the employee will be able to totally engage, this point emphasises the importance of worker relationships. Following on from Anitha's (2013) point of safety and its link with positive workplace relationships Kahn (1990) coins that in a workplace relationship where the person feels they can 'be themselves' makes the employee feel safer. This allows the employed to focus on the job at hand rather than focus energy on the conflict that may occur with another party.

As previously mentioned by Maslach et al (2001) the importance and the want for support in ones workplace, having a negative atmosphere in ones workplace will not motivate an employee if anything it will de-motivate them, they will sit around being unproductive until the earliest convenience to go home. It is not a safe feeling being in a workplace where you cannot have social interactions that make you happy.

Rana et al (2014) argue that the social aspect experienced by co-workers with other co-workers heightened feelings of energy and enthusiasm and with this came higher levels of productivity and motivation. Kahn (1990) also expressed that having a supportive atmosphere between co-workers allows employees to feel they can try new methods of working and if they fail have little fear of serious consequences. Bindu's (2012) study of the factors that affect employee's engagement proved that co-worker supportive relationships were positively related to employee's engagement.

It is clear to see so far from the literature reviewed for co-worker relationships and their effect on employee engagement that there is no doubt they have a positive effect. Armitage and Keeble-Ramsay (2009) condone the benefit of effective co-worker relationships by stating that in situations where there is a high performance working atmosphere that the communication between employees increased autonomy which Deci and Ryan (1987) already mentioned above would have a positive effect on employee engagement.

2.4.4 Training and Career Development

The idea of training and development effecting employee engagement is understandable, Alderfer (cited in Anitha, 2013) commented that the use of training and development allows the individual to feel a sense of reward because they are getting the opportunity to develop themselves and to better themselves. Wright, Gardener, Moynihan and Allen (2004) also comment on how training and development may be seen as a reward by commenting how some organisations that have an increase in profit would provide they're employee with higher pay or the opportunity for training. Also training and career development may bring about the feeling in the employee of acceptance. When the employee knows the organisation is investing in them it

gives them a sense of security which will ignite a higher level of motivation evidently leading to higher productivity.

Related to training and development but taking an alternative angle is Hazelton (2014) who makes the compelling case of positive emotions, they discuss how situations like training and career development in organisations can lead to employee having more positive emotions. Hazelton (2014) continues by listing the benefits that one can receive from heightened positive emotions such as better mental and physical health but also creativity and better relationships. Clearly through the use of training and development an organisation will benefit massively because not only are they up skilling their workforce but they are also increasing the employees creativity which will aid in the forming of new methods or procedures along with the promotion of better relationships which will decrease workplace conflict.

Gruman and Saks (2011) discuss the importance of performance management by referring to it as the ‘Achilles heel’ of human capital and claim that it is of the utmost importance for managers. Mone and London (cited in Gruman and Saks 2011) examine the possible justification of fostering the performance management process in order to include employee engagement, they also make the point that this would increase the levels of employee engagement.

It is clear from the literature examined above that training and development can have a long lasting positive effect on employee engagement. It has been noted by many authors the benefits to training and development so it would be in the organisations best interests to invest in the proper training procedures in order to heighten their chances of creating a more productive and engaged workforce. In doing this they will receive a large return on investment that they have input into their employees as previously discussed such as high productivity, creativity and a better working environment with positive relationships between co-workers.

2.4.5 Compensation

When one thinks of compensation in relation to work the immediate thought is higher pay or more benefits, but there is so much more to the compensation of an employee than one may first think. Firstly there are many other types of compensation besides pay, there are financial and non financial aspects of

compensation. According to Anitha (2013) a striking compensation package is made up of a combination of financial rewards such as bonuses and pay but also non-financial rewards such as an extra day of holidays. This encourages the employee to work to a high level of productivity and to produce high quality products or service because of the recognition they have received. Kahn (1990) speculates that an employee's engagement level is coincided with the perception of the rewards that they may receive. So in saying this Kahn (1990) is recognising that it is not the size, quality or quantity of the reward that matter it is the knowing that if the employee works hard they will be recognised and rewarded for it.

Saks and Rotman (2006) endorsed that recognition and rewards are major component of employee engagement. In contrast to this, Kular et al (2008) say that pay and benefits may be enticing in the recruitment process to attract candidates but they do not play a major part in retaining the employees.

Joshi and Sodhi (2011) study into the drivers of employee engagement found that compensation was ranked 2nd out of the six main drivers at the organisation. There are a lot of trustworthy HR practitioners as shown above that support the use of compensation and its benefit on employee engagement.

2.4.6 Organisational Policies

Within organisation there are countless policies and procedures, many of these can be connected to employee engagement such as, recruitment and selection, right from the first procedure an individual receives can leave a lasting impression on someone and if the process is fair then it leaves a positive vibe with the candidate. On the internal side of this the existing employee can become disengaged if they were to see bias in the recruitment procedure. Schneider, Macey and Barbera (2009) clarify this point by stating that the recruitment policy used by an organisation connects immediately with the employee's future levels of engagement.

Anitha (2013) promotes that work life balance is a vital policy/process that organisation can often overlook. Millar (2012) supports the fact that employees must be happy in life in order to be happy in work. Moore (2004) and Gallup (2005) both found that stress from the workplace and stress gathered at home can be linked. Every employee brings their personal life with

them into the workplace, not always physically but mentally, if there is a problem on your mind you do not forget it as soon as you walk in to work, it plays on your mind and can manifest over time causing disengagement if not dealt with properly.

In summary of organisational policies and their effect on engagement levels it can be seen by the authors mentioned previously that fair and empathetic policy and procedures that may be as simple as letting a mother have the day off for her child's birthday or vice versa. Richman, Civian, Shannon, Hill and Brennan (2008) believe that organisations ability to offer a flexi-work policy in order for the employee to avail of the freedom of a work life balance has an extremely positive effect on engagement levels.

2.4.7 Workplace Well-being

Workplace wellbeing would not be an area that is noted in a lot in literature in comparison to the other six drivers. The researcher believes that it is a generally new aspect in influencing engagement. Anitha (2013) describes workplace wellbeing as a "holistic measure that enhances employee engagement" (pp.312).

Roche and Haar (2011) comment on how an individual's overall life objectives are linked with workplace wellbeing by saying that if an individual's life goals and objectives are to have a good career, in a good company and make a good living then if that is what the organisation can offer it will promote workplace wellbeing. The researcher draws from this that you have to be in happy at work in order to be overall well. If your life goal or an ambition of yours was to work at a certain organisation and you achieved that of course you're more inclined to be engaged.

2.6 Closing Remark

To summarise the literature that has been reviewed there are many head strong themes that show us that there is a lot in employee engagement, it is not an easy task or state to be fortunate to achieve but the researcher believes that changes, not always big can make the difference in an employees working life. These small changes that can range from a well deserved recognition to a

manager treating the individual to a coffee can be the starts of making an employee see they are appreciated and valued in the organisation.

The main drivers that were seen throughout the research were, the work environment, relationships with the leaders or managers, co worker relationships, having training or career development, compensation, organisational policies and workplace wellbeing. All of these factors bring together what are the situational factors that are imperative for organisations to have in place to engage employees

The research questions have stemmed from this literature and from its aims and objectives. The researcher wants to investigate the employee engagement levels across Company X and test whether these 7 drivers are as important as it seems or is there anything underlying that the literature has over looked. Also with the support of Kular, S Gatenby, M Rees, C, Soane, E and Truss, K. (2008) stating that it would be worthwhile to explore employee engagement levels within an organisation but across different job roles the researcher aimed to measure this..

A closing quote, according to Gallup researchers Fleming and Asplund (cited in Anitha 2013, pp.310) employee engagement is “the ability to capture the heads, hearts and souls of your employees to instil an intrinsic desire and passion for excellence”

Chapter Three

3.0 Research Methodology

This chapter will examine the research methodology and the research tool that was used within this research project. This chapter will also examine the chosen methodology in detail and the considerations that were given to other research instruments and why they were not employed. Qualitative and Quantitative research are reviewed briefly and an explanation for why the researcher chose their approach. Horn (2009) recommends that a researcher should first identify the aims and objectives of their research because this will aid in choosing the most suitable methodology.

3.1 Research Objectives

The main objective of this research was to determine whether the main drivers from the literature were important with the employees of Company X. The second aim of this research project was to investigate the levels of engagement across different roles and job categories in Aviation Company X. When performing a research project such as this it is of vital importance for the researcher to adapt the most appropriate and relevant methodology. In order to do so there is a stage in the project where different tools and instrument must be investigated and the researcher must decide whether that tool is appropriate for their study. When the research begins and the researcher begins their primary research they can be confident that they will have chosen a method of research that will give the most beneficial data back for analysis.

3.2 Qualitative vs. Quantitative Research

One of the first thought processes that a researcher must go through is whether to choose the qualitative or quantitative path or to use a mixed approach. Both methods have their merits which will be discussed below and the rationale for why the researcher chose the Qualitative approach.

3.2.1 Quantitative

The quantitative method focuses more on the scientific and mathematical end of research, hence why Creswell (1994) stated that the two main instrument used in quantitative research is experiments and surveys; such as questionnaires that can generate numerical values for an individual's opinions. Horn (2009) confirms its use as a numerical measure by saying that quantitative research collects mainly numerical data and opinion. A study conducted using quantitative data is mainly scientific and will pursue testing either a cause or a hypothesis. Tarling and Croft (1998) believed that by using quantitative research that all human behaviours are measurable. Kahn (1990) performed a quantitative research study in order to investigate employee engagement at a summer camp and Anitha (2013) also undertook the quantitative method in their measurement of employee engagement. Although the quantitative method is world renowned and seen as an incredibly liable method for research the researcher felt that because they were not trying to prove a hypothesis and would rather see and note the physical behaviours of

the individuals being interviewed that the quantitative method would not supply this type of data.

3.2.2 Qualitative

Qualitative is quite the opposite of quantitative and so it should be, this method focuses on gathering non-numeric data. By using qualitative data the researcher can be present and in the moment with the individual and by having this advantage can use the opportunity to probe on questions of interest and build a rapport with the individual. This is a major bonus in order to build trust with the interviewee so that they feel comfortable to express themselves honestly. Kahn (1990) coined as the “pioneer of engagement research” by Sambrook, Jones and Doloriert (2013) stated in his work that there needed to be more qualitative research in relation to personal engagement in the workplace. Robson (2002) commends the use of the qualitative method by discussing how by using quantitative method one will be unable to capture the subtle characteristics and complexities that a human exposes during a face to face interview.

3.3 Rationale for Qualitative Research

It is for the above reasons that the researcher chose to undertake the qualitative method by choosing to perform semi structured interviews. Firstly the researcher wanted to be able to take note of the physical reactions such as changes in body language or changes in the person’s voice if they were made uncomfortable by a certain question.

The qualitative method allows the researcher to conduct an in depth analysis of the employee engagement levels at Company X across different job roles and whether length of service is an effecting characteristic on these levels. By having the physical presence with the interviewee the researcher is also able to probe the answers that are given in order to get the best data and most relevant results.

Although quantitative is a respected method and has supported many important studies the researcher felt that 15 in depth interviews with employees of company X would allow them to research deeper into the emotional connection that they have with the organisation and also help the

researcher to gain a deeper insight into the attitudes of the employees of Company X.

3.4 Data Collection Tools Considered

There are many advantages and disadvantages to all types of research methods. The researcher considered two alternatives before settling in on interviews. The first tool considered was questionnaires.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

Quinlan (2011) identifies a questionnaire as a structured means of gathering data. The questionnaire can be used in order to gather precise data. The researcher can design the questionnaire based on previous questionnaires in order to incorporate other academics ideas and grow on this. Questionnaires are best used to gather quantitative data. The use of questionnaires is undoubtedly popular it is a beneficial method of research for trying to reach out to a large sample. As the researcher based their questions on the literature that was found by Anitha (2013) and considering they performed their study by questionnaire the researcher wanted to examine a different approach. The researcher also wanted to be able to build a rapport with the interviewees in order to gauge their reactions and observe their behaviours, one thing a questionnaire cannot provide is visual proof of how a person felt when asked a certain question.

3.4.2 Focus Groups

The use of focus groups is defined by Zikmund (2000) as being unstructured and that there is the chance for the candidates to have free flowing conversations which can sometime be beneficial for research as the more people talk together the more similarities they find with one another and this could form a substantial ideal for the research. Quinlan (2011) identifies that in order for a researcher to have a successful focus group that they must be able to firstly facilitate the group and also be able to keep the conversation focused. It would be seldom that a focus group would consist of people from different organisations so the focus group will more than likely know each other, this is open an open invitation for the conversations to go off topic, the

researcher must be able to control the group in order to get the best data and most accurate answers. Horn (2009) describes a focus group as a recorded discussion with four or more individuals where the researcher has the ability to gather different opinions from many different people. A disadvantage to focus groups would be that sometimes there can be a dominant personality in the group which may restrict some quieter people from showing their opinions. This could have a very negative effect on the research because the data gathered would not be accurate.

Focus groups are effective for many types of research but because the researcher was investigating over different job roles and lengths of services it may be hard to get honest opinions from the candidates because they may feel their confidentiality would be breached with people they may know being in the group as well. Williams (1998) believes that one of the biggest disadvantages of focus groups is that the lack of confidentiality.

3.5 Data Collection Tool Chosen

Interviews

The researcher completed a total of 15 interviews, there were three job categories they wanted to investigate under which were, clerical, operative and cabin crew. Interviews were the best choice for the researcher and this research because it would give the candidate confidentiality and the freedom to say whatever they wanted about the topic without fear of judgement. The researcher wanted to be able to build a rapport with the candidates so that a comfortable atmosphere was created so the conversation could be more informal and the researcher could probe more in areas they wanted to gather more information. Quinlan (2011) confirms that building a rapport with the candidate is most possible from one-to-one interviews; they also say that one-to-one interviews allow the candidate to engage in the interviews.

The researcher performed 15 one-to-one semi-structured interviews, this consisted of a few general questions at the start such as job role, age, length of service etc and then moved onto questions derived from the literature, mainly from Anitha (2013) and then finished with open ended questions in order to gain an insight into what the candidate thought the company could do to engage more employees.

The researcher also chose interviews because they wanted to be able to see the behaviours of the candidates, to see if some questions made them uncomfortable or perhaps they would be more passionate about a certain driver than another. This proved beneficial as some of the candidates were very passionate in relation to work life balance and how the cabin crews shifts were very difficult at times and that for the employees that had young families they didn't know how they coped. Others were very despondent when asked if they were an engaged employee, if the researcher had conducted questionnaires they would not have gotten to see the reaction of some of the candidates that said they were engaged but were in a very low demographic of engagement, one candidate said they were hanging on to engagement by their fingernails. The researcher was able to probe this response and ask why they did not just say disengaged and they said it was the generation they joined in so this proves that a length of service was a contributing factor to their engagement in this instance. If the researcher had chosen a different method of research they would not have been able to gather this data.

3.6 Sample

The researcher chose to use convenience sampling as they have access to the individuals who work at Company X. The researcher chose to analyse a small sample of 5 people from the three main categories within the company, these being, Clerical (boarding staff, check in agents, general customer care on the ground), Operative (operating on the ramp where the aircrafts are such a baggage handling) and Cabin Crew (airhostesses). The researcher focused on these main three categories because Company X can be divided easily into the individuals that work under clerical, operative or cabin crew and they felt it would be the best representation for the study. This gave the researcher a total sample size of 15 people from various job roles.

The researcher understands that the sample is a small ripple in the large pond that is Company X and that the opinions and emotions expressed by these 15 people in no way stand for the entire population. The researcher chose these particular people because they knew they were honest people that would speak truthfully about their feelings and honestly about their opinions.

3.7 Data Collection and Analysis

The data collected was of a confidential matter, so the only individuals with access to the data were the researcher and the supervisor. Taking the advice of Quinlan (2011) if for some reason the data had to be moved from the home to the college or vice versa the researcher developed a plan of action with different scenarios in order to avoid damaged or loss to the data. All interviews were recorded on the researcher's phone in order for the researcher to review any behavioural, feelings or beliefs that were expressed and also in order for the researcher to transcribe them. (See Appendix I). After each interview the recordings were transcribed and the recording was placed in a password protected file on the researcher personal computer to avoid any chance of a confidentiality breach. The recording of the interviews were vital for the content analysis stage of this research because the researcher had taken from the literature their own conceptual model of what the main drivers of employee engagement was so in order to perform accurate context analysis the researcher was able to listen to the interviews again and take note of reoccurring themes and discuss them, this will be discussed later.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In relation to the ethical considerations to this study the researcher understand the discomfort some people may feel from partaking in an investigation into their working lives and how important confidentiality and anonymity is to them, in order to give the interviewees piece of mind the researcher provided them with a confidentiality clause that the researcher signed a presented to them at each interview. (See Appendix II)

3.9 Limitations

The researcher did not perform a pilot study, this would have been helpful to make definite decisions on which questions were vital in the interview and would have assisted in the smooth running of the interview from start to finish. This could have helped prepare the researcher for an interview where the interviewee was not as responsive as the researcher would have liked; they gave very short answers which resulted in not a lot of data being gathered from that interview. The interviewee gave the basic yes and no answers but they had no interest in discussing it further. If the researcher could do the interview again they would try and relate to the interviewees negative attitude

and try and turn the conversation to see if they could have probed out any further substantial data.

Chapter Four

4.0 Findings

This chapter will examine the findings from the interview. The findings will also be discussed in conjunction with the reviewed literature in the next chapter.

At the beginning of each interview the researcher confirmed the definition of employee engagement with the employee so that they were aware of the context the interview would be placed in. The researcher explained engagement by combining the many definitions from the literature and stating that engagement was the physical and emotional connection that an employee has with the organisation and that with a high level of engagement advances dedication in ones work and therefore the organisation thrives. Although not an academic definition it was easier to informally explain than to quote the employees different academic definitions.

4.1 Employee Background

Question 1, 2, 3 and 4 were aimed at gathering background information from the employee in order to start building a rapport and allow the atmosphere to become comfortable. The questions were also aimed at gathering the key characteristic information in order to categorise the individual within the organisation. Question 1 asked the employee to identify themselves in an age bracket that the researcher called out and then took note of. Question 2 asked them to identify their job title to clarify the job role that they were under. Question 3 then asked how long they had been with Company X. The length of service ranged from six months to thirty five years. Following up on the longer length of service they employee was asked why they and stayed with Company X so long. The answers were quite similar on this question, a lot spoke about their love of their job and the ‘buzz’ about the airport and how they loved the people they worked with. One cabin crew member preceded to name all the things they loved, they spoke about loving, getting up for work,

arriving at the airport, the uniform, the passengers, welcoming them aboard and getting to work with an amazing team of people. There were a few scarce answers to this that were not fuelled by the love of the job, one employee stayed because of financial commitments and one other stayed because they felt it would be too hard to get a job elsewhere now. After listening to the answers it was clear to see that the majority of the employees had stayed because they truly loved what they did and took pride in their work.

4.2 Engagement Level

Question 5 posed the question of the employee's engagement level. They were individually asked would they class themselves as engaged, ambivalent or disengaged. The researcher informed the employees the difference between the three so that they could give an honest and accurate answer. The results of this question showed that thirteen of the employees were engaged, one was ambivalent and one was disengaged.

4.3 *The Working Environment*

Question 6 was in relation the working environment. The employees were asked did they believe that the work environment was a contributing factor to employee engagement .This question received the same answer from all employees; they all believed that the work environment was very important in relation to employee engagement. There were comments in different interviews that it was important but that their working environment at this time "was toxic" another employee noted the importance of the work environment by telling the researcher that their brother had just left his job because of the unhealthy environment as new management had moved in.

4.4 *Trust and Relationships with Leaders*

It is common knowledge that trust between two human beings can make or break a relationship and in the working environment this is no different. Question 7 asked the employees do they believe that trust in their leaders was important in relation to employee engagement. The response was not very surprising, all employees answered yes that they do believe trust is important

for engagement. The interesting thing was that many made points that it was very “rare at the moment” for them, that they trust their leaders to a certain level and then above that level there is major mistrust. Some employees made remarks such as “without trust it’s pointless” or “you have nothing if you don’t have trust” and a personal favourite of the researchers “you’ve lost before you’ve even started”.

4.5 Co-Worker Relationships

Question 8 of the interview asked the employees if they believed that the relationship with their fellow team members and co workers is a contributing factor to their engagement level. The response from the employees was a massive yes across the board, they all have a lot of respect for the people that they work with and commented that the team they work with is a major contributor to their engagement level. Some employees made comments like “the people I work with make my day” and “if you have good working relationships then you are happy and you show respect to people and you will be more productive”.

4.6 Training & Career Development

Question 9 asked the employees if they thought that training and career development played a part in employee engagement in relation to them. All employees said that training and career development was important but some made comments about the training they received, that it was the bare minimum and that the organisation only re trained them because they had to by law. Two employees from the clerical category commented on a customer service seminar that they had been brought too and said that it was really informative and felt they had improved their skills from attending and one said they left feeling more engaged. One employee from the Operative category commented on how some people just reject the option of training and bring a negative cloud over the learning experience instead of embracing it. Another employee from the operative category commented that Company X would help them

with grants to go to college and further their education or they were given the option of learning a new language. The employee noted that those days were gone and continued to state that the airline only trains them to the standards of the Irish Aviation Authority so they are compliant to work in certain areas and not for employee benefits.

4.7 Compensation

Question 10 asked the employee if they felt compensation was a factor to engagement or whether it would have an effect on their engagement level. The employees had varied responses. One clerical employee stated that some people may be attracted to the appeal of more money or different benefits but that it would have an effect on them. An operative supervisor reminisced to the time when they would have a “shiny shoe day” to encourage well presented uniforms and as a reward they would bring them for coffee or give them a voucher for a free sandwich, they noted that not all compensation has to be money it can be as simple as a few extra minutes on your break and some simple recognition. One employee claimed “it would do no harm” and one other said that it is something that the organisation should definitely look into but as of now they are not.

The researcher gathered from these responses that a number of employees feel that it would be beneficial to engagement but that Company X no longer compensate the way they used too. Others thought that it would not be beneficial and that some people may buy into it for the financial gain but it would be like buying engagement.

4.8 Policies & Procedures

Question 11 asked the employee whether they felt the policies and procedures of Company X affected their level of engagement. The researcher gave examples of grievance procedures and recruitment and selection as examples of this so that the employee knew the context of policies and procedures. This question brought a lot of interesting comments from the employees. They touched on how the grievance procedures were not taken seriously and that if someone has a problem they should have somewhere safe to go to talk about it. An employee from the operative category noted that he goes to mass every week and that back a few years in Company X because there is a church on the

airport grounds that the manager never minded if they went over for a quick mass. Nowadays they would never be considered allowed to go, the employee noted that everything is what you are 'entitled' to now. He commented that the people he used to work with that would go to mass with him years ago were now his supervisors and that if he asked could he go to mass for 30 minutes he would be told no chance because they are not entitled to it.

This brings on the next comments from another operative employee about how in the recruitment and selection procedure that sometimes it fails because he said he has seen people who he knows are a bad choice be put forward as managers even though they have no social skills. A cabin Crew member also made the point about recruiting new cabin crew members, they stated that they could spot a great hostess right away but now they have no input in recruitment and selection and that the people who are hiring are not cabin crew and do not know what is properly required to make a great cabin crew member.

4.9 Workplace Wellbeing

Question 12 asked the employees were workplace wellbeing and work life balance a major part of your engagement level. All employees said that work life balance was not there for them, they work shift work and that you have to build your life around those shifts. Many of the employees made note in regards to the cabin crew, saying that their rosters were terribly hard and that the women who have families should be given more leniency. One operative employee noted that he has built his home life around his shifts and that yes there are a lot of occasions you miss. Another operative employee noted that his wife says he is never at home but that he couldn't imagine working away from shifts, he tried it but it just wasn't for him.

The cabin crew seems to have the worst time with work life balance and their general well being. As the researcher conducted the interviews in the homes of the employees the cabin crew employees commented on how their suitcases were still packed from yesterday because they are flying out the next day, one cabin crew member still had their suitcase in the kitchen from the day before ready to go the next morning. The employees all commented that workplace

wellbeing was important but that the organisation was not making it a priority at that time but most made the point that if it could be sorted that it would make a wonderful difference to everyday life.

4.10 The Main Contributor

Question 13 began to wrap up the interview the researcher asked the employee what the main contributor to their engagement was, they were comprised of

- Being listened too
- Passionate about their job
- Their own personal attributes
- Positive attitude
- Personal Pride in their job
- Loved the job and co workers
- Respect and recognition

4.11 Organisational Improvements

The last question, Question 14 asked the employee if they though there was anything that the organisation could do to improve or increase engagement levels at Company X. A summary of the responses are

- Communicate more
- Recognition
- Listen and give feedback
- Take grievances seriously
- Improve work life balance
- Include staff in the long term strategy meetings
- Stop trying to outsource staff
- Stop bringing in untested systems
- Improve staff levels

4.12 The Engagement Levels

Overall the engagement levels at Company X were surprising, out of the fifteen, thirteen were engaged and only two were disengaged. The interesting

thing is that both the disengaged staff worked in the Operative category. The researcher has taken from the interviews that this is because of the drastic changes to their working environment. There has been a new system implemented and therefore is a lot less human contact with their superiors. Judging from the conversations the researcher had with the operative staff they did not get sufficient training on the systems and have little to no trust or respect for their managers.

Chapter Five

5.0 Discussion

In the previous chapter a summary of the responses to the interviews questions was examined. This chapter will now continue on from this by discussing the responses and comparing and contrasting them from the reviewed literature. This chapter will end with the recommendations that the researcher has for Company X in regards to their engagement levels and any recommendation for further study on this area.

As Question 1, 2, 3 and 4 were purely for gathering the employees background there is no need to compare this with the literature. However the points to note from these responses were the length of service that the employee had, they ranged from six months to thirty five years, there was a follow up question to the employees who had a longer length of service than normal, ten years plus. The researcher believed it would be beneficial to understand why they had stayed in the organisation so long because this is one of the main benefits of employee engagement, retaining good staff. The responses were varied across the employees, there were many that said they loved the job, they loved the 'buzz' about the airport, there were others in the operative field that stayed because of financial commitments and another employee from operative claimed that it would be too hard to gain a job elsewhere. This brings the researcher to one of their objectives about looking at the engagement levels in an organisation and across different job roles. When examining the answers of

the other employees and how they love their job and enjoy going to work in comparison to the operative role that were less enthusiastic, the researcher would take away from this that the operative role has a lesser engaging work atmosphere.

Following on to Question 5 in relation to the engagement level of the employees, the researcher can confirm that all 5 cabin crew identified as engaged employees, 5 out of the 5 clerical were engaged and 3 out of the 5 operative employees were engaged. These figures did surprise the researcher as they had anticipated the results being lower than this, but it seemed the pride and love for their job that the employees took at Company X thrived in their hearts above their many concerns within Company X and the drivers that they were questioned about. This coincides with the emotional factor that academics wrote about in relation to employee engagement (McCashland 1999, Howe 2003, Baumark 2004, Richman 2006 and Shaw 2005). Perhaps it is possible for the employee to have such a strong emotional connection to the organisation that they feel they remain engaged no matter what is happening in the background. A clerical employee made the comment that they “will always be engaged no matter what they will always go into work engaged” other employees said that they feel they need to be engaged for their job. The researchers understanding of this is that they feel that without their engagement and their positive outlook on work that they would not be able to complete their job to their best ability, which in a way is a great mindset to have in employees because as this has obviously been instilled in them through the organisation as one would not see that in many organisations today.

5.1 Working Environment

Rich et al (2010) found in their study that employee engagement comes from many features within the organisation. Along with Anitha (2013) who in their study found that working environment was the leading factor that contributed to employee engagement. There is a clear comparison between the literature and this research; it was found that the working environment is a large driver for employee engagement. But the researcher believes that even in a negative work environment engagement still has the power to flourish because the

employees of company X claim to be engaged with their organisation but yet some claim it to be very disengaging and toxic at this time.

A self confessed engaged cabin crew member was adamant they were engaged but that if someone were to come into the company now rather than when they had come in they would find the atmosphere disengaging and toxic. An operative employee also made a comment similar to this in saying that their work atmosphere was very disengaging at the time but they still believed themselves to be engaged. Within the literature reviewed there were no examples of this where an employee would not be 100% positive about their workplace and be engaged. Most academics that were reviewed for this study claimed that the employee should be happy and content within their workplace and have an emotional, physical or cognitive connection with their organisation. Perhaps instead of the original thought of having these three connections to the organisation it is possible to be engaged in your workplace due to just one of these connections, like in this case where there is a clear emotional connection between the employees and Company X.

5.2 Trust and Relationship with Leaders

It is evident that the employees understand the importance of trust in leaders and that they agree wholeheartedly that it is vital for engagement. Gillespie and Mann (2004) discuss how the trust between an employee and their leader can lead to a long line of benefits for the organisation, although Gillespie and Mann (2004) are correct that a good leadership relationship leads to benefits within the organisation and also for the employee it is contrasting with what the researcher found. The employees of Company X amplify their belief in the importance of trust with statements such as “without trust it’s pointless” and “if you don’t have trust you are lost before you have started” but yet would still label themselves as engaged employees. This is a puzzling predicament that occurred, the employees of Company X believe in the drivers and their importance but when asked about trusting their leaders in their jobs there was not a positive response. A clerical employee claimed they had trust to a certain level of management but above them there was no trust, a cabin crew employee claimed that they do everything they can to avoid their management and an operative employee said that they believe it is important but it is very rare in Company X. Beech and Anderson (2003) stated that the engagement

levels may be lower in an organisation that has low trust between employees and their employers. This contrasts to the research findings, although the employees understand the importance of trust and a good relationship with their superiors they do not believe they have it but yet remain engaged.

Along with trust comes the aspect of communication with the employers, Townsend and Gerhardt (2008) encourage a healthy flow of communication from superiors to employees in order to build rapport with them and create a positive connection. This again contrasts with the research findings, the research found that more often than not the employees main factor that the company could improve on to improve engagement levels would be to communicate more, give more feedback and listen to their staff more. A CIPD report in 2006 proposed that effective communication is a key driver in engaging employees, Powis (2012) went as far to implement a employee engagement group (EEG) in order to install continuous communication with employees and managers. The academic literature on this subject is clear about the benefits and effectiveness of communication but in Company X it was clear that there was no flow of effective communication. This puts a gap in the research as to why the employees of Company X were engaged but didn't have a positive relationship with their superiors. The researchers understanding of these findings is that there is a contrast in the findings and the literature and that this is a new area that could possibly be looked into, is the manager- employee relationship really as important as once thought or are there other drivers that can outweigh this driver.

5.3 Co Worker Relationships

One of the most cited academics in relation to engagement, Kahn (1990) commented that in a workplace where the employee feels they can be themselves makes them feel safer. The researcher found this to be absolutely accurate; in this research the relationship between the employee and their co workers was incredibly important to them. One cabin crew member said that the team you work with can make or break your day; they commented that they had had a great day at work the day of the interview because the crew they were working with on the aircraft were brilliant. Kahn (1990) also said that having a support system in the working atmosphere also contributes to the

engagement levels, this matches with a comment a cabin crew member made to the researcher about how the crew they work with could solve any problem.

The relationships that the employees of Company X seem to have with one another are second to none, there was such positive feedback about working with their co workers and team members. Employees made some compelling arguments such as one employee from operative saying that if you have good working relationships with the people you work with then you are happy and productive but how can you be engaged when the people you work with are disengaged. The employees also talked about treating each other with respect and that it was a two way thing to have good relationships with work colleagues. One employee commented that “it will always be important for engagement”. Rana et al (2014) talk around this area and discuss that the social aspect that is experienced by employees in their workplace can lead to higher levels of enthusiasm, energy and from this comes high levels of productivity and motivation. The researcher understands these findings to prove that the relationship between an employee and their co workers carries a lot of importance in regards to engagement and is most definitely a strong driver in engagement.

5.4 Training and Career Development

The importance of training and career development was emphasized by Gruman and Saks (2011) when they commented that the performance management or career development was the ‘Achilles heel’ of human capital in an organisation and that it was of vital importance. The employees of Company X expressed that training and development opportunities had become scarce, they used to be able to avail of an array of training and career development opportunities such as, learning a foreign language or the company offering a grant programme so the employees could gain a better education. Sadly the employees confirmed that these development schemes were no longer available. Two clerical employees did comment on how they had attended a customer service seminar and that the resulting factor was a peak in their engagement levels. An operative employee made the comment that if there was to be a training day that people in his team would make a negative cloud around it, sighing that they would have to sit through a full day

of training, this type of behaviour from co workers can have a domino effect on the employees emotions about training.

Hazelton (2014) made a gripping case around positive emotions, Hazelton claimed that by employee's having more training and career development they are likely to have an increase in positive emotions. Hazelton (2014) also states that there are many benefits to having heightened positive emotions such as creativity and improvements in mental and physical health. The employees of Company X made reference to the training that they do receive and the fact that they only receive it because it is required by law, they claim that Company X only trains them to the standards of the Irish Aviation Alliance standards mainly so they are complaint to work in certain areas. The researcher understands that there is a comparison in the findings and with the reviewed literature in that the literature gives plenty of evidence as to why training and career development are important for employee engagement from academics such as (Hazelton 2014, Gruman and Saks 2011 and Alfeder 1972). The employees of Company X want more training and career development; they want more opportunities like they used to have. The research has found that there is a need for training and development in relation to engagement and that it is a contributing driver for employee engagement. The researcher believes that the engagement levels of the employees of Company X are not solely based on training and development or on any specific driver but that there are certain drivers that appear more important to them than others.

5.5 Compensation

The compensation question in this research did not prompt much feedback; there were some comments that were indifferent in relation to compensation and its connection to engagement, some employees commented that it would be no harm; others felt that it would feel like the organisation was buying engagement levels. The employees felt that the compensation scheme they had years ago had been a lot more beneficial than the one that was implemented now. Some of the employees that had been there a long stretch of time reminisced back to the time when recognition was a simple act of kindness from a superior, such as a few extra minutes on their lunch break, now they were lucky to get their full assigned lunch time. The literature speaks about the positivity of recognition and rewards being major components of employee

engagement, Saks and Rotman (2006). Joshi and Sodhi (2011) study into the drivers of employee engagement found that compensation was ranked 2nd out of the six main drivers for engagement. The researcher feels that there is evidence from the findings that there is a connection with compensation to be a driver of engagement, but feel that it is not a major contributor as the literature states.

5.6 *Policies and Procedures*

The policies and procedures in an organisation are the infrastructure to how it operates, its rules and regulation and a system that is put in place for the benefit of the employees and right from the get, there is recruitment and selection. Schneider et al (2009) express the importance of this procedure by discussing how the recruitment policy of an organisation connects immediately with the employees' future engagement levels. There can be recruitment internally and externally, an employee of company X from the operative category stated that they had seen people going forward and being promoted to management and they knew they were wrong for the role because either they had been promoted purely because of who they knew. This type of action within organisations sadly does still happen today, this can cause unrest within employees of an organisation as it has done in Company X. The questions aimed at policies and procedures gathered the employee's feelings about some of the main policies and procedures that mattered to them. There was a lot of upset about the grievance procedures and many of the employees commented on how if management listened, took more action and took the matter seriously that engagement levels would definitely increase. A number of employees, mostly cabin crew commented on the long hours that they have been working and one cabin crew member told the researcher that they had just worked six days in a row and were getting ready to head out the next day as well. The recruitment and selection procedure for the cabin crew came up with one of its members also saying that the people that recruit for cabin crew have never done the job so they do not know what to look for they commented that they could spot a good crew member a mile away.

Richman et al (2008) believe that work life balance has an extremely positive effect on engagement levels; this matches the findings in this research. Also the recruitment and selection procedure, although apparently not strong in

Company X is important by the standards of Schneider et al (2009). The researcher believes that the policies and procedures for an organisation are a large contributor to the overall engagement of its employees. The researcher thinks this because it is a sign of what the company stands for, the way they treat their employees and how they can be viewed by the outside world. The researcher would definitely feel that policies and procedures judging from the link with the literature and the findings is a strong driver for employee engagement.

5.7 Workplace Wellbeing

Moore (2004) and Gallup (2005) both found that the stress and feelings that one gathers in the workplace during their day to day work can be linked to the feelings they have at home. It is hard to switch off ones emotions the moment you walk out the door of one life to the next, those lives bring workplace and home. Hazelton (2014) made the compelling case for positive emotions and how beneficial they are to us as humans, that they can benefit us mentally and physically. The researcher believes this is linked to workplace wellbeing as well as training and career development. Anitha (2013) describes workplace wellbeing as a “holistic measure that enhances employee engagement”, the employees of company X at the moment do not seem to have a key interest in workplace wellbeing and there is not a lot of literature on the driver of workplace wellbeing. The researcher believes that it is a good concept for the aims and objectives of an organisation match those of the individual employee. The researcher feels there is a gap with the literature and the findings on this driver and that they would not at this time consider it to be a strong driver of employee engagement.

5.8 The Main Contributor

Question thirteen of the interview asked the employee what they believed the main contributor to their engagement level was, the results of this question are listed in the previous chapter on findings, the main contributor that the researcher took away from the interviews is the employee’s personal attitude and attributes. This was not a main driver that had been considered in the literature review, mainly because it had not come up in the literature that the researcher has read into. It is an extremely stimulating concept; it makes sense

for an employee to feel that it was their person that made them the worker they are today. The researcher found it very interesting that the majority of the interviewees did not note a main driver as their main contributor. There was something special about Company X, there was a sense of pride across all employees, one would expect if you interviewed in another organisation you would not find the level of pride that was found at Company X. There was a deep love of the organisation and what it stood for, it was extremely admirable and a pleasure to investigate. Although there are clearly flaws in the internal systems, the employees stand more by the name of the organisation and what it stands for than they do their own managers.

5.9 Organisational Improvements

The final question on the interview asked the employees about the improvements they felt that Company X could make in order to improve their engagement levels or to sustain the level of engagement they have; these results are also listed in the previous chapter. The main improvement the employees wanted amended was the factor of managerial communication, there seemed to be a serious lack of good communication from managers to employees. The literature is very clear on the importance of communication between the manager and the employee, confirmed by the CIPD report (2006). Simons (2011) also examines the positive effects of a two way communication channel with managers and employees and notes that it is a key driver in engaging employees.

5.10 Concluding Comments

Following on from the findings and the discussion of this research in coalition with the literature reviewed the researcher believes that the strong drivers of employee engagement are the working environment, relationship with ones co-workers and policies and procedures. The researcher believes that these three drivers were the head strong drivers that proved the most influential to the employees of Company X. The mediocre drivers or the drivers that are of importance to employee engagement but not in this case are trust and good relationships with leaders and training and development, although the literature does emphasis their importance to organisations and engagement levels, they proved not very important for this sample of employees from

Company X. The employees understood the importance but it did not affect their level of engagement. The literature was in favour of compensation, there are many different types of compensation and of course this would be thought to engage employees but for the employees of company X it was not a great driver. Workplace wellbeing is a very new topic in the world of business and the researcher felt that it was a great concept but at this time would not consider it a main driver for engagement in company X.

Chapter 6

Conclusion and Recommendations

6.0 Conclusion

To bring to a close, this thesis was aimed at investigating the main drivers for employee engagement within Aviation Company X. The aviation company is one of the largest aviation groups in Europe that operate out of Dublin Airport. The researcher examined a sample of 15 people from three different categories within company X. The literature that was examined related to the definitions that were found and the main components and subsequent drivers to engagement, there were seven main drivers found from the literature, these were then put to the employees of Company X through one to one interviews to test whether these drivers were in fact main drivers for engagement.

The first aim of this research was to test drivers to engagement that were considered the main factors according to literature, within the aviation industry. The results showed that out of the seven main drivers which were; the working environment, trust and good relationship with leaders, relationships with co-workers, training and career development, compensation, policies and procedures and workplace wellbeing; there were some contrasts from the literature and the findings. The researcher believes that there are three head strong drivers that proved the most influential to the employees of Company X. They were the working environment, policies and procedures and the relationship they have with their co workers.

The second aim of this research was to test the engagement level of Company X with the sample of 15 candidates as they were from three different roles within Company X it was interesting to find that the operative category held the only two disengaged employees from the three roles. The researcher

diagnosed that it was the major changes that had happened in this area, the lack of communication that they had received and the personal touch that was lost as new systems were implemented.

6.1 Suggested further study

If there were to be further research on this topic, the researcher would suggest using a questionnaire and trying to gather a larger sample in order to gather more engagement levels so that a more accurate engagement level for the entire company could be assessed. Fifteen interviews could not possibly judge the engagement level within the aviation industry Company X.

6.2 Recommendations

Considering all the information gathered throughout this research the researcher would make a few recommendations to Company X and any companies that feel that their workforce is in a similar state.

The first and most important recommendation is to implement a strong communication method between management and the employees, the employees of Company X had very strong feelings in relation to the lack of communication from management. The employees were adamant that they want to be listened to more; they don't feel that management take their opinions seriously if they hear them at all. The foundation of a good organisation is built around the relationship between employees and their managerial relationships. The researcher believes that if the management in Company X were to invest time in forming a fitting communication procedure that engagement levels would improve and the employee's attitudes to management.

The second recommendation would be for management to invest in a work life balance scheme, many of the employees of company X expressed concerns about their work life balance and their lack of. The employees seemed to understand that the organisation is busy and that all employees have been affected and that most organisations are working twice as hard these days with half the money than ten years ago but more recognition for the employees would assist in the daily workload by a lot. Simple recognitions that the manager and superiors could muster up would do the world of good for the employee's attitudes and resulting in better productivity. The researcher

understands that organisations do not have extra capital to be throwing at recognition and rewards and cannot afford to provide the work life balance that every employee wants but if they looked at trying to invest time in a solution they may find that simple recognition practices like the employees suggested from back a few years, such as extra time on a break or possibly extending a compliment when someone has completed a task efficiently costs nothing.

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Appendix I

Interview Scripts

Interview One

Q.1 Age Bracket

45-54.

Q.2 What is your job role?

Cabin Manager

Q.3 How long have you been working at the organisation now?

I had 25 years this January.

3(b). Why did you stay all these years?

I think, firstly I enjoy what I do; I really enjoy what I do. Although it has gotten very hard, however, I have had an awful lot of good years where the

organisation was very good to me and my husband. My husband was with the organisation for 32 years. The company has been very good to me on a personal level but I know that has all changed now. I know the bottom line now is figures, figures, figures. Also, the people are fantastic, the cabin crew and ground staff all have a good support network with each other.

Q.4 What made you apply/join the organisation?

It was a complete and utter fluke; I had first planned to go to Galway to pursue Hotel Management, but decided against it. I then didn't know what I wanted to do but, ever since I was in school I was always working in bars or hotels so I was always in that customer service industry. An ad actually came up for a different airline, which I joined in February 1988 and I joined Company X then in January 1989.

Q.5 Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Oh definitely engaged.

5(b) Why would you say that?

Probably all the involvement that I have, also I like to know what's going on, I like to do the job as best as I can on any given day, I'm not complacent about it. Also if there is a problem I report it, I am a firm believer in speaking your mind when it comes to reporting a problem.

Q.6 Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

I believe that if you asked someone who has only been in the organisation 2 or 3 years and the environment over those last year and recently has been very toxic,. Now I'm talking about after you would check into 'our' area. Where I have the benefit of being there for 25 years so I'm not intimidated, I speak my mind and I won't be intimidated, I come in and do the job as best as I can. But

if you were to ask someone else they may say differently and say that the environment is not good, whereas I've been there done that and I carry on with my job.

Q.7 Do you believe that trust and good relationship with leaders effects Employee Engagement?

Absolutely! I think that it's a huge aspect, whether it's a problem that someone is having, that they go to the right people, that managers are directing them to the right people and that they are listened to and that it is taken on board and not just pushed aside somewhere.

Q.8 Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

I believe it is incredibly important, what is a day at work if you do not get along with the people that you work with, it would be awful.

Q.9 Would training and career development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

To be honest not really, it would be nice to be up skilled but it would not affect my engagement levels personally.

Q.10 Would Compensation play a part in your Employee Engagement level?

To be recognised more would be great, I feel that it would engage me more and possibly build stronger relationships.

Q.11 Do you feel then that the organisational policies and procedures are important for Employee Engagement?

Following on from the leadership trust and the grievance procedures yes, that these performed correctly are essential. Now that we are linked with Europe with the whole airline industry, now we are all under the guidelines of Eiasa, so it means that every airline would be on the same playing field.

Q.12 Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

Yes, the hours that we work can be dreadful; we have very long shifts and not enough recuperation time after long haul flights.

Q.13 What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

That's an interesting one, firstly I would say personality, I'm a person who would always see the glass half full rather than half empty. There are times as well, I always say that what comes with age is the confidence to be able to have the conversations and you can mediate between other people and you can see the bigger picture and all those things. I would have to say age and personality were two main contributors.

Q.14 Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Absolutely, I think really and truly, to take grievances, major grievances seriously and treat them with respect; this is what is coming out an awful lot around what is happening at the moment. It's no surprise to all of us that every organisation in the whole wide world is working twice as hard as they were ten years ago with the same or less money. We all know that, we are not stupid however it's how you achieve the goal with just a little bit of respect. We are being targeted and looked upon as someone that working Monday to Friday 9 to 5 in an office with two days off and that's just not the job that we do, were losing a couple of nights sleep a week and you doing all of those things and it's hard to keep up the pace all the time and for that to be acknowledged that that is actually happening, it's the fatigue and mental health of cabin crew, I can't speak for ground staff, I'm sure they are going through their own thing at the moment, but I can speak for cabin crew, it's just outrageous and not healthy what is being asked of us it's not normal. That is where I would find that the respect doesn't come in; our lives are being devalued more than somebody else's. Everybody has a right to a life, I love the organisation, I really do but the organisation doesn't own me and I feel that's where the organization has fallen down big time. A couple of years ago they were talking

about work life balance and there isn't, it hasn't been achieved and it seems like no one wants to work on it to achieve it. We are all very happy to work; very happy to work however there has to be a family life too.

Interview Two

Age Bracket

45-54.

What is your job role?

Operative Duty Manager

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

Just over 25 years.

Why did you stay all these years?

Well, when I started there it was a job for life that has changed somewhat now though. It is a job and they are so hard to get at the moment there is no point in trying to move

What made you apply/join the organisation?

It was recommended to me by one of the managers that worked there at the time and I was looking to move back up from the country to Dublin, so I applied

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Engaged

Why would you say that?

Because you have to be, in my position I have to be engaged, I don't have a choice I have to try and do my best to get the job done.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Yes.

Would you believe trust in leaders and good relationships is important for Employee Engagement?

Yes, there is trust up to a certain level and then its mis-trust more or less after that. If our managers were more open with it would certainly lead to a higher level of trust.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Yes, how I treat people definitely reflect on how they treat me back and how they get on with their job.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

Certainly, but some people would react negatively to training, putting out negative energy and sulking about having 'another' training day.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

It would do no harm.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Yes, absolutely, for example in our company, discipline is not very well looked after.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

Absolutely, it has disapproved quite recently with the use of computerised rosters.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

My personality.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Well more staff really, this would contribute to everyone which releases pressure and creates more productive workers and that way people wouldn't be in a rush and you would be able to engage with people more.

The organisation is a big company and its split up into a few sections and communication between those sections has improved drastically in the last few years but it needs to improve more that makes it easier down the line for people to do their jobs. If we don't get the right information how can we do our jobs correctly? Barriers have been created between clerical and operations.

Interviewee Three

Age Bracket

45-54

What is your job role?

Passenger Services Supervisor

What made you apply/join the organisation?

Well I first joined in 1984, after college and I always wanted to join Company X; it was always up there with my aspirations. I always wanted it, I was determined to go there and once I had made my mind up that was it I made it happen.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

I have a couple of year's broken service, where I went away and came back to it, in total I have 21-22 years service all together. I was first on a temporary contract and then went to another airline, I then came back and eventually went to an American airline, but I heard the organisation needed staff in London and I decided that I wanted to go. I have loved it all I honestly have its not an office type job everyday is different.

Why did you stay all these years?

There were a lot of opportunities, I met a lot of people and made some great friends, but I also worked hard to be where I am now, I am a firm believer in if you work hard at something you'll get something out of it.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Engaged, no matter what, I will always go in engaged.

Why would you say that?

As I said, I will always be engaged in the organisation no matter what may happen I will always give 100%

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Yes

Would you believe trust and good relationship with leaders important for Employee Engagement?

Yes absolutely, without trust there is nothing, you wouldn't have anywhere to go if you had a problem, working without trust is pointless.

Q.6 Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Yes, because if you have a good working relationship, and if your happy then it's even better because when you're happy your productive and you treat everyone with respect, it will always be important for engagement levels.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

I think the customer service course they put on this year was great and I know they invested heavily in it, it was probably one of the best customer service seminars I have been too, now it was all day but I felt that I took a lot away from it, that it up skilled me even more.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

Not so much, obviously some people will be intrigued by the thought of more money or other types of benefits but I don't think it would have a massive effect with me anyway.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Taking them seriously would be a start. It feels like you are not heard, I think that if they applied more care to grievances, yes engagement would increase.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

It is really hard at the moment being short staffed, but I believe it were to be resolved it would be wonderful.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

Positive attitude, I feel that if you go in with a negative attitude you will go nowhere. You have to go in feeling positive and upbeat all the time, no matter what it will be different everyday luckily.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

They need to sort out the rosters in my opinion, there needs to be an emphasis placed on work life balance because I believe that is what is causing the disengagement.

Interviewee Four

Age Bracket

35-44

What is your job role?

Customer Service Supervisor

What made you apply/join the organisation?

My father worked for the organisation and he would always say that it was different everyday and I wanted to have a job that was different every day, to have new challenges. It also close to home which is a perk, it's good for travel and I felt it was an organization with a lot of opportunities for progression.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

Continuously 4 years, I started in 2009 they kept us for nine months and unfortunately they let us go but brought me back soon after.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Engaged, I think I have to be and that it contributed to my recent promotion.

Why would you say that?

I believe it is necessary for my type of job; it would not be beneficial if you weren't engaged in the organisation.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Yes I do but honestly a lot of our staff would be disengaged though, especially at the moment

Would you believe trust and good leader relationships are important for Employee Engagement?

Yes absolutely, you need to have someone you can trust in to go to with issues

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Yes, the level of respect determines a lot and good communication is key to a happy and productive workforce I think.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

Yes we recently had a customer service seminar that I feel increased my motivation for work, I don't know what other took away from it but I definitely felt more engaged after.

Would Compensation affect your level of engagement?

It would feel as if they were trying to buy engagement rather than earn it through good training seminars and fair treatment of all employees. in my opinion anyway.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

I think having someone to call or for the person to feel listened too is a big thing, for instance if on a survey a lot of employees were unhappy at a particular aspects you want to know that they would do something to help change it, that they would 'engage' that way.

Is workplace well being and work lie balance a major part of you engagement level?

At the moment, they are trying to prioritise it, which would be great.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

Being listened too and also having a positive outlook, trusting others also. I feel you have to feel like you belong, feel settled, I think that you shouldn't look at another organisation and think 'what is it like to work there?' I believe feeling welcome and like your career is meant to be here is a big help. Finally feeling part of a team.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

They could definitely do more; sort out the work life balance. People are worried about new policies on break that seem like the organisation is just going to over work the staff and doesn't care for our health.

Interview 5

Age Bracket

45-54

What is your job role?

Clerical

What made you apply/join the organisation?

I left school back in 1981, so after that I did a lot of menial jobs, working the fields for my dad. At the time there was not a lot going that was permanent but the organisation was and that's really the reason I applied.

Q.2 How long have you been working at the organisation now?

Since 1990, 24 years last April.

Why did you stay all these years?

I have to honestly say I do love my job, I love the outdoor work. There are also a broad spectrum of personalities in the organisation and the craic you can have with such a wide variety of people. Obviously there are the people that you don't get along with but then there are the people that are lovely in all aspects that we do, we get to work with other areas of the organisation. When one company in the airport closed down we took on their responsibilities so that was great to be able to learn new skills and have new responsibilities.

I have met people in my life that hate their jobs, I mean really despise them and they could be on twice my wage and I ask why do they stay and they don't really have an answer besides staying because they need to, for financial reasons or whichever. They spent a lot of years going to college and they don't want to give it up now.

I believe that if you like your job it is very easy to stay if you hate your job it's hard to live.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

I would defiantly say I'm engaged, although I can never explain why I am engaged. You get a sense sometimes in the organisation that management

don't even know your name and then you find yourself thinking, why I do this to the best of my ability. But I believe that if you like your job you don't look for thanks or recognition, but you do sometimes get frustrated that management don't thank us or understand how hard we do work.

Why would you say that you're engaged?

It's hard to describe, I'll go back to saying if you love your job it's very easy to be engaged. For the last 4 or 5 years, with the new responsibilities I really enjoy it, I wouldn't say I would do it for nothing but I really enjoy it and I get paid to do something I'm extremely happy doing.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Massively because I take for instance my brother just left his job because the work environment was so bad, he did work in a smaller company that he was managing, but a new manager came in and was given most of his responsibilities and he was just left floating and he couldn't stick it so he left. I believe that if you hate a job you have to leave, it's different with me because I love my job and I work in a larger organisation so if there is a personality you don't particularly get along with you can easily work around that.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leaders is important for employee engagement?

Yes but my experience in the organisation is that it is very rare. My experience and I only speak for myself and my feelings that when people start to move up the corporate ladder they forget where they came from and once the suit comes on they just don't engage with you and they treat you differently it's the worst thing that I feel the organisation hasn't corrected in all the time I have been there.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

I find it is easier to get through the day when you get on with people; I don't want to come home frustrated because you don't get on with people, and it is

just so much easier to do your job when you get on with people. I find that working in such a large organisation you can work around it.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

They train us every year because they have to by law, but in my job they regularly re-train but I feel that it's just so we won't form bad habits.

Would Compensation affect your level of engagement?

At the moment when we took on the new responsibilities from the company that closed down we said we would happily take over but that we would like some payment for it and we are now fighting four years for it.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Yes , an example of a policy that the organisation used to have is that, I am not a massively religious person but they used to let us go to mass in the airport church and I like to go to mass they were very flexible for the 30 minutes we would be gone. But now the people that I used to work with are supervisors and if you asked to go to mass now they would say no, no chance because we are not entitled to it.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

I find that I have made my home life; I work my roster around my home life. You don't really get a social life with our rosters because you could be in until 1am and then have one day off and then be back in on a 0430am the next day. You come to live with it though and I don't let it phase me though, there are a lot of occasions you miss.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

The main part, I think it's just because I love my job and that's being honest with you. I never get up and complain about going to work.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Listen to their staff, they never seem to listen, at the moment we have a new system coming in and it is just a disaster. I know the people that are working on bringing the system in and they have said it is not going to work. It is a computer that is going to assign all our work, our swaps, our rosters everything, but our work is complicated and there can be set backs and this will cause delays in flights which in the long run is going to annoy the passengers and this could cause for them to go to other airlines. We have a serious lack of staff as well; we need more staff to function better.

Interview Six

Age Bracket

55-65

What is your job role?

Duty Operations Supervisor

What made you apply/join the organisation?

At the start it was just the travel opportunities that came with working for an airline.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

Initially my intention was to stay for a few years but I am there about 35-36 years now.

Why did you stay all these years?

There is a buzz about the airport that I love, the shift work as well you either love it or you hate it.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Engaged definitely

Why would you say that?

I like the job, I like the atmosphere and I like the challenges I face every day.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

My working environment at the moment is fairly good, 96% of the people I work with are brilliant, they are engaged they want to get the job done; they are still there 20 years later. I find the younger crowd are coming in now and are like me when I started just wanting to travel. It's great to have the positive workers I do have.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leaders is important for employee engagement?

100% yes. You need trust, if you don't have trust it doesn't work, you're lost before you have even started.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

The employees know what is expected of them with me and they know what I'm expected to do in my role. Sometimes we don't even communicate and we know what we are supposed to do, like a well oiled machine.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

It does benefit, and we have done some up skilling but we are finding that we don't get the tools right away. We would get the training and then we are fighting for the tools to perform better. We found that after training that it (the operation) does work well but then we find we only have half the tools in order to make it that effective.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

Not really any, it's very hard to compensate them. If you're there and you like it then that's that. Maybe job security would be better compensation as when

you know your job is there you will happily stay. Unfortunately sometimes it doesn't work that way though

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Grievances I'm not too sure on, it's only recently that HR has been outsourced to an agency. I actually have been making enquires because I don't think they are making a good contribution to the airline. There are a couple of grey areas that they are saying one thing and doing another. I really don't think they are contributing enough. Human resources could do more but because it's outsourced it has lost a personal touch that it used to have.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

The wife says I'm never home! I feel that I can only do shift work though, it works well for me I have tried to do the normal nine to five hours but it wasn't for me. But shift work is great and yes it has its downfall where you won't get that weekend off that you wanted. But for me where I am situated at the moment we have a lot of opportunity to chop and change our roster. 95% of the time, actually 99% of the time you will get the time off you needed.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

The small recognition I got, I worked hard and was recognised for that and I got promoted a few times. I am now supervisor which is where I want to be.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

I don't think they are listening to the staff on the ground level, they have a lot of good ideas but they never get off the ground unfortunately. They have a suggestion box but honestly I don't think it is ever opened. They are coming out with new plans now but they never ask the staff do they think it will work. They are bringing in the best people to think of the ideas and implement it but they never ask the people who will be working with these new systems do they think it will work. They should be looking to the staff and asking them there

opinion on whether it will work or what can they change to make it a better fit. Like the new inform system, it will work in some areas and then not in others, all the staff knows that, we knew this before they attempted to bring it in.

Interview Seven

Age Bracket

35-44

What is your job role?

Operations Supervisor

What made you apply/join the organisation?

I joined because it was a well established company; it was friendly and was suppose to be a job for life where you would have a good pension. There were lots of opportunities to progress and I had heard they were very good to their staff.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

15 years.

Why did you stay all these years?

Not really the organisation itself well original it was private but we were well looked after and we had good staff morale but right now it's the people that I've worked with that kept me going.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

I would say that I am hanging on by my teeth to still being engaged, but there are people that I work with that would be extremely disengaged.

Why would you say that?

I think it was probably the era that I came into the company, how we were talked to and that there was communication, we were valued. But now there is a new generation that have arrived and all they want is to be paid and not do

any work. But I still have the old mindset that is what keeps me engaged and the loyalty to the passengers.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Right now my work environment is very disengaging, back a few years we would go out and do the task at hand and then come back to the one hub and when you arrived you would speak face to face to your supervisor for your next task. But the new building has separated us. We have very little communication now and it is mostly over the phone.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leader's effects employee engagement?

Yes and the fact that there is no group leader now. I believe we need to go back to the old way and have a team leader for every however amount of people.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Yes, I would say a good 80% of it is who your work with. If you don't get along with who you work with then you will not be engaged.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

No, I think it is really important for training but for the last few years we just get the bare minimum because that's what they have to do. We used to be able to learn another language when they were putting more resources into their staff, but that has all stopped now. About 8 years ago you used to be able to go back to college to further your education and the company would give you a grant but now they don't do anything like that. The only thing that they do in regards to training us is what is expected from the standards of the Irish aviation authority to make you compliant to work in certain areas.

They never bring you in to praise you or for a pep talk it is always on the negative.

Would Compensation affect your level of engagement?

I think the reward system we used to have been scarce we didn't have a lot, but giving people a few extra minutes on their tea breaks was appreciated. I used to do a 'shiny shoe day' to encourage the staff to improve their appearance and that way I could look at everyone on a whole instead of singling people out and then whoever has the shiniest shoes I would give them a voucher to get their breakfast. It doesn't always cost money.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Yes, especially with the cabin crew, but in our area there is a new system now inform and there has been no specific training, we are doing the trial on it now, we use Ipads and we were never given training on them we had to figure out how to use them ourselves. It used to be a constant communication so we would learn better and have the opportunity to ask questions.

They want us to use our mobile phones which I am refusing to do. They are introducing all these new systems and my attitude is why they are fixing something that was not broken in the first place. They said that these new systems will save money for the shareholder. They think that we have a lot of staff and are therefore extremely flexible and can get away with things but we only have a shoe string of staff and it is stretched to the limits. I am afraid that at some stage that lace is going to snap to the detriment of safety, all it takes is one accident and were gone. There is too much flexibility in our job to implement this rigid system that tells us where we are to be at an exact time.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

Yes, not so much for me but I think more for the people who have kids.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

The staff, it really is the people you work with. When I got sick, the staff carried me it is a family. But it is sad to see that the good will of the staff is hanging on by a thread because they are so over worked. We need more staff.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Come down and work the front line with us, they aren't down enough with us, communicate more. They should give more recognition, little praise to the staff. One of our higher bosses who would only come down to give out about negative things came down to our break room when we were on our 15 minutes breakfast break, firstly he should have approached us on a more professional level not while we are eating. But he came down anyway and said thank you for all the hard work over the last few days because we were so under staffed and out of the fifteen people that were in the break room not one person spoke to him, he eventually said that all he wanted to say and left. For not one person out of fifteen people to even acknowledge his presence just shows how little respect there is between us and him because he would never show recognition. I believe that small praise would improve the relationships between management and staff greatly.

Interview Eight

Age Bracket

45-54

What is your job role?

Cabin Manager

What made you apply/join the organisation?

The lure of travel concessions and the fact that it was a permanent position.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

25 years this month

Why did you stay all these years?

Traditionally the contentment and the lifestyle we used to have more time off and we could travel more.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Engaged by nature.

Why would you say that?

I would say I still take pride in what I do. It is a reflection on yourself.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

There are good and bad points. There are a lot of time constraints and sometimes we don't get all the tools we need.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leaders is important for Employee engagement?

Extremely, if you're going to have engaged people you need to have a good level of communication between you and your supervisor

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

There are two aspects of that I believe, the first is that you can be extremely engaged and then be surrounded by people who are disengaged but if you have good communication skills it does help

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

I think the organisation is very poor at training and development to be honest it would not contribute to me being engaged

Would Compensation affect your level of engagement?

That is one definite thing that the organisation should look into but as of right now they don't.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

I think our selection and recruitment is all wrong, I am a cabin manager and I have hardly any involvement at the moment but they are bringing it back. I can

spot a good crew member a mile off and I think the people that are performing the interviews now don't see a side of the job that is vital. You need the personality.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

It was huge years ago for me and my engagement I got more time off to recuperate after long haul flights but it's not like that anymore, our roster is extremely challenging. I don't feel there is strong work life balance at the moment.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

I take a lot of personal pride in my job; I have a personal pride in the organisation, even with all that has been going on lately. At the end of the day if I go into work tomorrow and I'm not engaged and a passenger has paid a lot of money for the ticket and worked hard to pay for their flight and if I'm not engaged and the staff aren't engaged it is going to spoil your flight.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Yes, they need to listen to their staff. There is endemic problem in the company where the management think they know everything.

Also improve work life balance for the staff that has family at home, especially cabin crew. I know it is the job they got into but the management could try and roster it better.

Interview Nine

Age Bracket

35-44

What is your job role?

Senior Cabin Crew

What made you apply/join the organisation?

Well I worked for cabin crew for another airline and I wanted to go part time when I had my first child and when I asked for this they said they couldn't accommodate it and so I moved to the organisation.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

I was there from 2000 to 2001 and then 9/11 attacks happened and then I went back in 2004. So really about 15 years now in total.

Why did you say all these years?

I love it, I love my job I love what I do, and I love my colleagues.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

I would say engaged.

Why would you say that?

I would be engaged in regards to the fact that I love my job, I have three children and I have never minded having to get up at 5 in the morning for work, I never complain. I love getting onboard I love the uniform I love being recognised and I love what people think we stand for. I wear my uniform with pride.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

On board definitely, the passengers and my colleagues definitely affect my engagement level. I love that when I close the aircraft door that it is your aircraft then and you make your day what you can.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leader's effects employee engagement?

I wouldn't have a lot to do with them, I try to avoid them at all costs because I don't think they are genuine, I have no trust in them.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Yes because my colleagues make my day and even today we had a great team on board and I had a great day at work so I leave feeling great and positive.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

Well I took part in an award that would recognise customer service in the airline industry and I won the award, it was great when I came back it was in the newspaper and I basically became the face of the organisation but they never utilised this. I have gone back to the awards and trained the course that I was thought when I won but the organisation has never utilised that for me to train staff here. It cost them ten thousand euro to send me to the course to get trained and they have never used my skills. They tick all the boxes that are required of them and move on.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

Three years ago we would have been better looked after but since new rules and regulations came in all the 'looking after us' has gone away. They don't have empathy anymore.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

I had an accident a few years ago on board and n one phoned me when I was at home for seven days, no one phoned me when I was in Orlando. They didn't look after me coming home, normally they would upgrade me or downgrade a passenger but they didn't. They would before but not now.

We have gotten new team leaders in and all our old supervisors are gone, but when I got off that aircraft after being injured my old supervisor was there with flowers and my team leader didn't even call.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

Again three years ago we worked 35 a week but now we could do up to 60 hours a week, like I have just done six days on and one day off and now I'm back in for five. So I have no work life balance right now

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

The main reason for me being engaged is that I love my job and the people I work with, we are all counsellors to each other, we can sort anything out. We are an amazing bunch of people. I love the organisation; I don't like the management, if they had more respect for us I believe they could get more out of us.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Just respect us and listen and appreciate the long ours we do.

Interview 10

Age Bracket

45-54

What is your job role?

Flight Dispatcher

What made you apply/join the organisation?

I had been working for an airline in the UK but then I moved home and joined the organisation

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

14 years

Why did you stay all these years?

The people I work with

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Disengaged.

Why would you say that?

I feel management never listen. My view/opinion is of no interest to the management

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Yes and no, there are different aspects to it

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leader's affects employee engagement?

Definitely, we do not trust our management team

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Absolutely, they are the only reason I have stayed this long.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

No, management don't care about our progression

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

No, management need to respect us more

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Yes because they are not being implemented properly.

Is workplace well being and work lie balance a major part of you engagement level?

Yes, we don't have work life balance; they don't appreciate the hours we work

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

Respect and Recognition

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Speak to the staff

Stop telling lies

Stop trying to outsource staff

Stop bringing in untested and untried systems

Show the staff some respect.

Interview eleven

Age Bracket

35-44

What is your job role?

Clerical Grade 2 Supervisor

What made you apply/join the organisation?

It started as a summer job.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

19 years

Why did you stay so long?

I have financial commitments

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Engaged

Why would you say that?

I enjoy what I do and enjoy going to work every day.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Yes, it plays a strong part in our daily lives and if it is not a positive place to work then there would be a lot of disengagement

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leaders is important for employee engagement?

Yes, there is not a great deal of trust with our managers at this time. It would probably be a greater place to work if there was effective communication

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Absolutely! I have made lifetime friends throughout the years who I Know are there to support me whenever I need them, you won't find that in every company, I'll tell you that.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

Yes, I think it is an important aspect for engagement; we haven't received a lot of advance training though, mostly the bare minimum.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

Not me personally.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Yes but there are a lot that need improvement, like the grievance procedures, they are not taken seriously to date I feel.

Is workplace well being and work lie balance a major part of you engagement level?

Yes, the work life balance at present is doing no one any favours, it has caused most of the problems that we have at the moment.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

My individual personal attributes

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

An improvement in communication.

Interview 12

Age Bracket

35-44

What is your job role?

Operations

What made you apply/join the organisation?

I wanted to avail of the travel opportunities

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

14 years

Why did you stay all these years?

The fact that I was travelling; it is a great amenity to have.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Disengaged

Why would you say that?

I feel there is a lot going on in Company X that are dragging down employee morale.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

I believe it does affect people's engagement level because it is the main aspect of your job, the environment is everything.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leader's affects employee engagement?

Yeah, if anyone can ever figure out the management in our place then it would great, I believe some good communication could change everything.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Very strongly, I would believe that is the reason that there are still people left. The cabin crew especially have been through a lot lately with their rosters, but they are a tight knit group and I think they are supporting each other.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

No because we have the training when we first start and then just every year after that is a kind of refresher training, there is rarely anything new offered to us.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

Financial rewards would be a bonus for my life but there are so much more underlying problems in Company X that need to be tackled instead of bringing in compensation to try and gain engagement.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

Yes, they are not being handled or taken seriously; this is going drive employees mad.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

Not seeing any results after fortnightly meetings with my manager, they just don't listen.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Supply feedback. Provide full resources, staffing levels. Acknowledge people's ability and the effort and loyalty of the staff. Include staff in the company strategy.

Interview 13

Age Bracket

30-34

What is your job role?

Senior Cabin Crew

What made you apply/join the organisation?

I love what Company X represents, it is an icon organisation

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

Almost 10 years, time flies

Why did you stay all these years?

Straight out of school I knew I wanted to be cabin crew, my mum is cabin crew and I have always admired how she looked and carried herself in the uniform,.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Definitely engaged.

Why would you say that?

I adore this job, I would not change my job role for the world, and I will fly for the rest of my life, god willing.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Yes, the working environment is critical to engagement, especially when on the aircraft, if you are on a long haul flight that is your office there is not leaving, you make the day what you can.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leader's affects employee engagement?

I actually get on great with my supervisors, now above them I don't get too involved, there is a lot going on with our rosters at the moment and we feel like we are not getting the respect we deserve.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Now that is something that I can relate too. I work with a wonderful set of people, they are truly so genuine, without each other I don't know how we would get through the day, we can go through some pretty rough times on the aircraft, there are a lot of different cultures that board the aircraft and some passengers can be quiet distressing, along with disgruntled passenger, we are a team in the sky and on the ground.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

Over the years there have been refresher courses but nothing substantial that would stand out and drive my engagement any higher to be honest.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

As I was saying earlier about our rosters being mixed-up and the workload is extremely hard some weeks, it would be nice to be recognised for the work we do. I feel sometimes we are put under so much pressure and have to work so many hours but because all management see is a sheet that says the flight went out on time with full crew on time they think everything is fine the way it is being run but they don't see the strain we are put under some weeks.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

Work life balance is not present at the moment of cabin crew, as I said we are working ungodly hours for no recognition, the company need to invest time in fixing this before someone gets seriously ill from exhaustion.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

I think because I have a strong commitment to Company X, it has been in my family as long as I can remember and I think the pride my mother has for her job was instilled in me from a young age.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Recognise the hard work we are doing and try and sort the rosters.

Interview 14

Age Bracket

35-44

What is your job role?

Clerical- Check in and boarding

What made you apply/join the organisation?

It was a job that was hiring at the time and was something I wanted to try, I like working with people.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

Roughly about 7 years

Why did you stay all these years?

I do enjoy the job; I deal with lots of people every day and get to help passengers reach their destination with little hassle.

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

I would be engaged I think.

Why would you say that?

As I said I enjoy my job, there is always something new every day and I find it thrilling, I couldn't sit at a desk Monday to Friday; I enjoy the shift work and getting to meet all different characters.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

Strongly yes, I find the environment I work in can have its ups and downs and people can get very stressed but at the end of the day when we run an efficient operation it makes it all worth it when the last plane departs.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leader's affects employee engagement?

Trust is important no matter what, if it's with a manager or a colleague, you are not going to have a successful working relationship if you cannot trust that other person to have our back if needed.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

Definitely, as I said about the ups and downs, we do have our moment but the people I work with are mostly all positive, of course there are the few people who are very negative. But the positive people make me laugh and we get through the day together.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

I don't think the company has money for bonuses or any type of compensation at this time, they are barely communicating with the staff. I wouldn't be expecting it anytime soon anyway.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of you engagement level?

The shifts are a bit all over the place to be honest lately, I heard they are bringing in a new system that it going to sort all the rosters, I know another company in the airport is using it and it works well for them so I hope it takes with us and maybe we can get hours that will suit us.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

Being positive, in the airport, especially at check n you get a lot of people who wouldn't speak English, or would have their bags over weight and refuse to pay, you name it I have experienced it. I think that my positive attitude has really helped me to stay calm and to make the best of situations rather than to get worked up and upset. So I think my positive attitude and how I approach my work.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Sorting out the rosters would be my main suggestion for management, that and communication with its staff more.

Interview 15

Age Bracket

20-24

What is your job role?

Cabin Crew

What made you apply/join the organisation?

I wanted to fly, I always wanted to be cabin crew and Company X was my dream company.

How long have you been working at the organisation now?

Only about 6 months

Would you class yourself as an engaged, ambivalent or disengaged employee?

Engaged

Why would you say that?

I love this job, I can't imagine myself doing anything else but flying, I had jobs before this in offices and I wish I hadn't wasted time there and started here straight from school, I found my passion.

Do you believe that the Work Environment is a contributing factor to Employee Engagement?

I am just getting use to the working environment to be honest but so far everyone has been really nice.

Would you believe trust and good relationships with leader's affects employee engagement?

I have yet to build trust with management, my senior on the aircraft is always nice and helpful, but for the higher up management I haven't had much contact with them.

Do you believe that the relationship with your fellow team members and co worker is a contributing factor to employee engagement levels in your organisation?

I really enjoy the team that I work with, we do rotate from team to team but everyone I have worked with is really nice and it's easier to work with people who are nice and that make you comfortable.

Would training and development in your mind play a big part in Employee Engagement levels?

I had an intensive induction training that was really informative, this made me feel confident about the task I was about to embark upon. I haven't really had any other training yet.

Would Compensation affect your engagement level?

I really don't know about the bonuses yet, I would imagine that they would make people feel better though.

Are the organisations policies and procedures such as recruitment and selection or grievance procedures affecting the levels of engagement would you think?

I haven't had to deal with that yet thank god, but in relation to my recruitment I thoroughly enjoyed it. The people interviewing were really nice and the training was run very efficiently.

Is workplace well being and work life balance a major part of your engagement level?

I am very busy with my shifts but at the moment I am really enjoying just learning and gaining experience with different staff members, I know there is some upset at the moment with the cabin crews rosters but I am only new so I am keeping to myself.

What do you think was the main contributing factor to your level of engagement?

The main thing would probably the fact that I love the job and I am really happy.

Is there anything in your opinion that the organisation could do to keep up or increase levels of engagement?

Nothing that I can think of really, as I said I am only here 7 months.

Appendix II

Confidentiality Clause

The main objective of my research is to study the importance of the main drivers to employee engagement within Aviation Company X.

The second objective is to measure engagement levels across different job roles in Company X

I guarantee that the results of these interviews will be kept anonymous and results will only be seen by myself and my supervisor at NCI, if required. No information will be passed to employers or other employees taking part. There are no identifying questions included.

I thank you greatly in advance for your participation and cooperation.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards,

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