



“Employee Engagement....Does it Exist?”

By Aisling Igoe

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for a BA
(Hons) in Human Resource Management**

National College of Ireland

2009

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Authorship declaration	iv
Acknowledgements	v
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	2-3
1.2 Structure of dissertation	3
1.3 Organisation background	3-5
CHAPTER 2 - EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT	6
2.1 Understanding employee engagement	7
2.2 The business case	7-8
2.3 Levels of engagement	9
2.4 Drivers of engagement of employees	9-10
2.5 Induction and training into a new job	10-11
2.6 Job design	12-13
2.7 Employee development	13-14
2.8 Relationships with management	14-16
2.9 Flexible working and work-life balance initiatives	16-17
2.10 Communication Processes	18-19
2.11 Reward and recognition	19-21
CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
3.1 Relevance of the research	23
3.2 Method of research	23-24
3.3 Questionnaire format	24-25
3.4 Reliability and Validity	26
3.5 Ethical considerations	26-27
3.6 Analysis of the information received	27
3.7 To conclude on methodology	27
CHAPTER 4 – RESEARCH FINDINGS	28
4.1 The response	29
4.2 Findings on when an individual starts a new job	29-32

4.3 Findings from when employees are carrying out their jobs	32-33
4.4 Findings in relation to receiving feedback and recognition	33-35
4.5 Findings in relation to personal development	35-36
4.6 Findings on rewards and benefits	37
4.7 Findings on relationships with management	38
4.8 Findings on work-life balance initiatives	38-40
4.9 Findings on communications	40-41
4.10 Findings on engagement levels	41
CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS	43
5.1 Conclusions drawn from the data analysis	44
5.2 Recommendations for improvement	44
5.3 Recommendations to improve the induction & training process into a new job	44-46
5.4 Recommendations to improve the design of jobs	46-47
5.5 Recommendations to improve giving feedback & recognition	47-49
5.6 Recommendations to improve rewards for employees	49-50
5.7 Recommendations on improving relationships with management	50-51
5.8 Recommendation on improving employee development	51-52
5.9 Recommendations to improve work-life balance initiatives	52-53
5.10 Recommendations to improve communications	53-55
5.11 Recommendations to improve engagement levels	55
5.12 Implementation	55-56
BIBLIOGRAPHY	57
Books	58
Journals	59
Websites	59
APPENDICES	60
Appendix I - Pilot copy of questionnaire	61-63
Appendix II - Copy of questionnaire issued to participants	64-66
Appendix III - Questionnaires completed by participants	67

Authorship declaration

I hereby certify that this material, which I now submit for assessment of the programme of study leading to the award of a BA (Hons) in Human Resource Management is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

Signed : *Shalini Jha*

Date : *14th July 2009*

Student Number : *08871931*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to acknowledge and say thank you to those who supported me during this dissertation. Thank you to the respondents of the questionnaire for giving me your time and participation in this research project. I would also like to acknowledge my Mother and my work colleagues who have supported me greatly for the last five years whilst doing my studies to get to BA (Hons) in Human Resource Management level.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

To accomplish great things, organisations must surround themselves with people who complement their business. As global competition intensifies organisations seek to retain their talent, engaging employees becomes an issue of increasingly high importance. To be surrounded by talented people, good work practices need to be in place. Most companies understand the importance of having an engaged and involved workforce, yet often it is seen as a 'nice thing' rather than a must have. Whilst company value statements may mention employee engagement and harnessing the potential of all employees, this may not be backed up by the investment into it. There are many case studies that have shown that by having a committed and engaged workforce can add to the bottom line and it is something that all employers should nurture. Employee engagement is becoming increasingly important for organisations that want to remain competitive and deliver a great customer experience. Organisations are under growing pressure in today's economy to be competitive and to achieve profitability and it is through employees that they can accomplish this. A strategic approach to employee engagement, one that is built on trust, open channels of communication, fair procedures and processes and the development of employees creates a working environment in which employees are willing to go the extra mile. Engaged employees impact on the productivity and financial performance of a company. The relationship between employer and employee has become increasingly more important in recent years, there needs to be that right balance there in order to extract the best from people in the work place.

The objective of this dissertation is primarily concerned with employee engagement practices in Irish Business and Employers Confederation (IBEC). The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To identify the employment relationship between employer and employee to see if employee engagement actually exists in IBEC.
- To determine who has the responsibility to ensure that employee engagement practices are in place.
- To identify some of the existing gaps that IBEC have at present in their employee engagement practices and be able to put forward recommendations to be able to remedy these gaps and improve engagement.

In these harsh economic times how IBEC staff service their customer depends greatly on whether IBEC retain their member companies resulting in success, so therefore employee engagement is essential now more than ever and they need to realise this and structure it for success and the need for leaders and managers to play a part in building an engaged workforce.

1.2 Structure of the dissertation

Chapter 2 examines all relevant literature to enable the reader to have a clear insight into the topic of employee engagement. It will also highlight how by having an engaged workforce is linked to better business performance for an organisation. It will discuss what practices are deemed best in the workplace to ensure that an organisation has a fully engaged workforce.

Chapter 3 outlines the chosen research methodology adapted for the purpose of the study, the research objectives and the reasons as to why I have chosen that method and the advantages associated with it.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the survey and a discussion and analysis of the findings to see whether employee engagement actually exists in IBEC.

Finally, Chapter 5 contains a further discussion about the findings of the research and then puts forth recommendations that IBEC might find useful for the future to improve employee engagement practices.

1.3 Organisation background

This section will enable the reader to visualise the current activities in IBEC at the moment. IBEC are a representative body that provides a wide range of services to member businesses and organisations from all sectors and of all sizes. They are a trade association representing the needs of enterprises in Ireland from multi-nationals organisations to small and medium enterprises. They provide advice and assistance to member companies of all sectors in Ireland on matters such as, Employment Legislation, Human Resource Management, Information Communication and Technology (ICT), European Affairs, Education and Training, Economics and Taxation, Social Affairs, the Environment and Health and Safety. IBEC are a very high profile organisation in Ireland. They are at social partner level. They

try to establish the views affecting organisations in today's economy. They do this by their direct negotiations with Government Ministers and State Officials, they try to ensure that the issues that are affecting organisations stay high on the Government's agenda and that they are at the centre of policy formulation. They are the national voice of Irish business and employers. IBEC are a non-profit organisation. Its income is generated by membership subscriptions from member organisations on a yearly basis.

In relation to the context of employee engagement in IBEC, there are questions around as to does it actually exist at all? It may exist for some but not for all employees. Although IBEC gives out advice and assistance to member companies about employee engagement it appears even before investigation that they do not practice what they preach. Reality in the company is very different to what they advise member companies. With the recession that Ireland is in at the moment this is having a substantial decrease on the renewal of organisations remaining in membership. This is the first recession IBEC has ever traded through so it is vital that we have an engaged workforce to support us through this time. In these harsh economic times IBEC has had to make cut backs and has opened up a voluntary redundancy package process. People have come forward but not enough, therefore, there is the possibility that compulsory redundancies further down the line may occur. From speaking with work colleagues it is apparent that everyone seems to be feeling apprehensive and demotivated at the moment because of the unknown that faces them and having to pick other workloads from the staff members who have gone and not even knowing if their own jobs are safe in the future.

Ultimately we need to make our members feel they cannot be without our service and it is through our staff that we are going to achieve this. What IBEC need to realise is that internal practices that resolve employee issues and build employee commitment in turn build customer commitment and that is what we need to focus on moving forward. There is a direct link between levels of engagement within an organisation and the level of its customer satisfaction. The link between employee engagement and customer satisfaction is irrefutably positive and common sense. Customers interacting with engaged employees have a more positive experience when compared with dealing with a disengaged employee. Customer commitment builds earnings and value for shareholders. It is our mission in IBEC to serve our members promptly and professionally and to aid as a backbone to them in present times.

Members dealing with engaged employees experience higher satisfaction from the service and higher satisfaction leads to more repeat business and word of mouth leads to more business. By having an engaged workforce this should enable us to service our members better in these harsh times. This dissertation needs to find out are IBEC employees “willing to go the extra mile” for the company. It is a time of change and some uncertainty prevails and trying to engage a workforce in times of change can be difficult.

CHAPTER 2

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

2.1 Understanding employee engagement

Employee engagement can be defined in a number of ways such as a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organisation. It is ultimately about what employees think and believe about their company and its values and how they feel about working for the company and how they act in relation to their company. A combination of all the above that are harnessed in a positive way within an employee can lead to high engagement levels. It means the employee is “willing to go the extra mile” for the company. There may be organisations out there that are performing very well that may not have an engaged workforce, however, if they are leading the way with a less than fully engaged workforce, imagine what they could achieve with a fully engaged workforce that are willing to go the extra mile. As stated on the Towers Perrin website, 9 out of every 10 workers in the world want to take on challenges, are eager to learn and ready to put discretionary effort into their jobs. Unfortunately, only two do so. They call this discrepancy “A workforces engagement gap”. Companies need to imagine an organisation where not only do employees show up but they consistently do exceptional work. Companies need to start working on closing the engagement gap and companies that act on this see performance soar.

2.2 The business case

The business case for engagement shows that having an engaged workforce is good for business. According to the Towers Perrin International Survey Research (IRS):

“It goes without saying that no company, small or large, can win over the long run without energised employees who believe in the mission of the company and understand how to achieve it”.

Towers Perrin IRS have shown time and time again through their research that there is a proven link between employee engagement and business performance is undeniable. An example of this would be where engaged employees in customer focused roles are more likely to treat customers in ways that positively influence customer satisfaction resulting in return business. They say that organisations that fail to engage their people fail to reach their full potential. Engaged employees are more loyal, the greater the number of loyal employees, the lower the cost of recruiting, hiring, training, and developing, not to mention the positive effects on productivity, and there are overall lower absenteeism rates, improved customer

experience, customer loyalty, boosted business growth and sustained long-term success. Therefore, there are significant benefits to the company by having an engaged workforce.

Some of the main drivers as to why companies should look at employee engagement are:

1. People have become the primary source of competitive advantage – they are more likely to stay and thrive in an environment where they feel engaged by the company and the work it performs.
2. As recruitment and retention are costly exercises, companies are realising the cost advantages of keeping and rewarding their key people. A company that values and develops employees and encourages them to feel that what they do makes a difference to the company, will be more likely to retain those employees than not.
3. HR practitioners have found a way of positively influencing business strategy through employee engagement initiatives. The role of the HR function is to support and influence the overall business strategy. If, as many companies claim, people are their key resource, then HR can lead the way in ensuring the most effective use of that resource through employee engagement initiatives.

There are many companies out there who are thriving without dedicating time and resources to employee engagement, however, given the turbulent economic climate that we now find ourselves in, change will be necessary in order for any business to survive and thrive and the importance of having an engaged workforce now is ever more important. As CIPD state:

“Employee engagement is vital to organisations seeking sustainable competitive advantage”.

Companies need to commit to employee engagement, employee advocacy and learning and development more than ever because they are going to be critical components in retaining the strength of an organisation and enabling it to build for the future in these difficult times. As stated by Bradley in an article by Searle (2009, p. 21):

“If you stop looking for people with great capability and stop developing people – they may stay with you while times are tough but they will leave when times get better again”.

Therefore, if you invest in people it pays off in the long-term.

2.3 Levels of engagement

As stated in an article by Treacy (2008, p. 7),

“There are different levels of engagement among employees”.

They are as follows:

- *Engaged* – employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organisation forward.
- *Partially engaged / disengaged* – Employees are essentially “checked out”. They sleepwalk through their workday, putting time, but not energy or passion into their work.
- *Actively disengaged* – employees aren’t just unhappy at work, they are busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day these workers undermine what their engaged co-workers accomplish.

The importance of employee engagement as a key to harnessing the potential of the workforce is vital. It is now time for companies to start working on those employees who are on the “partially engaged or disengaged stage” and work to bring up their levels of engagement and this can aid as an invaluable tool to ensuring that your company stays the course and thrives through difficult times ahead. Where there is disengaged employees a company may come up against some hostility when trying to implement change because employees feel threatened. To overcome barriers to engagement senior managers and line managers need to demonstrate organisational values and behaviours that they want to foster within the organisation and they need to communicate with employees openly and consistently. Acknowledging the impact of change but including people in building a better future helps to maintain an employee’s engagement. Having a high number of disengaged employees is a warning sign and employers need to act on trying to turn it around. Companies would notice a fundamental shift from disengaged to engaged workers. It can literally transform the workplace.

2.4 Drivers of engagement for employees

There are a number of common factors that drive and raise employee engagement within organisations. According to research done by Watson Wyatt and the World at Work Association, they found that many companies do not fully understand employee priorities. It is important for organisations to identify what engagement means to their own employees before taking steps to increase it, particularly in view of the increasing diversity of the

workforce. Various research companies such as the ISR and Towers Perrin have identified through carrying out research surveys that according to employees in various organisations across countries, that the main drivers for employee engagement and why they stay in companies are the following, well thought out induction and training programmes when they started, the nature of the work, job security, employee development, communication processes, relationships with management, flexible working and work-life balance initiatives and recognition and reward. Let us discuss some of them.

2.5 Induction and training into a new job

It is important that new recruits are given a thorough induction in to the new workplace. Induction emerged where a new employee has a fear about walking into a new job. It is a period of change, a new socialisation process. Induction is about giving a new employee the basic information they need to enable them to settle down quickly and happily and to become productive as soon as possible. Its about diffusing any apprehensions a new employee maybe experiencing. Individuals in a state of transition will experience anxiety, which can be stressful. The Small Firms Association believes (2002, p. 3):

“Induction is not just the formal introductory course that staff members take on their first couple of weeks, its a staff members full integration into the new company and organisations have a responsibility for this”.

A new persons first couple of weeks in a new job sets the tone of their attitude towards the company and their expectations about their career there. Decisions to stay in or leave organisations and feelings of commitment or alienation would appear to follow from sense made by newcomers from the early stages of the job experience. New employees who are thrown straight into a job and not given a formal induction, their attitudes towards an organisation turn from bright enthusiasm of starting a new job towards feelings of sourness and disillusionment. Therefore, companies need to realise that first impressions are important. Induction lets a new employee know what is expected of them by the organisation in terms of behavioural norms and the values that employees should uphold. As Cook states (2008, p. 146):

“This is a great opportunity to inform employees of the vision and goals of the organisation and to share its values”.

Or in other words as Armstrong states (2003, p. 455):

“It provides them with the way things are done around here”.

Induction is important for organisations to place importance on not only for the new employee but also for the company itself as the company themselves will have most likely put considerable time, effort and finances into recruiting the new employee. Giving more attention to induction pays off as it increases the commitment from the new employee. It is the beginning of the engagement process and it allows the company to send the right message across that they care about their new employees by equipping them with the tools they need to be able to start their new job. As we stated earlier the first few weeks in a new job are vital, by paying attention to induction the employee is less likely to leave the company.

There are various training techniques available to companies to use to assist them in helping a new employee to settle into their new role such as:

- On the job training – consists of instruction or coaching by trainers or fellow work colleagues in the workplace. This method is often known as the “sit by Nellie” approach. It is a technique of telling or showing trainees how to do a job and then allowing them to get on with it. It is the most commonly used training method. It is direct and the employee is actively engaged.
- Mentoring – new employees are guided by more experienced employees who guide, encourage and support them. Mentoring is aimed at complementing learning on the job. It also complements formal training by providing those who benefit from it with the individual guidance from experienced managers who are “wise in the ways of the organisation”.
- Coaching – is a person to person technique designed to develop individual skills knowledge and attitudes. Coaching is most effective if it can take place informally as part of the normal process of management. It is about helping people to become aware of how well they are doing and what they need to learn in a job.
- In-house systems – which are specific software packages that organisations use for the needs of the company. In-house systems can be specific to an organisation. Most new employees get trained in on these when they start in an organisation. Eg I.T. packages.

An induction and training programme should not be perceived as an end in itself. It is good practice for a manager to monitor and review progress of the new employee after just a few weeks of employment and discuss any problems the employee may have.

2.6 Job design

Job design has two main aims, first to satisfy the requirements of the organisation for productivity, operational efficiency and quality of the product or service and second of all to satisfy the needs of the individual for interest, challenge and accomplishment, thus providing for “job engagement” – a commitment to carrying out the job well. As Armstrong states (2003, p. 341):

“Clearly these aims are interrelated and the overall objective of job design is to integrate the needs of the individual with those of the organisation”.

When managers are creating jobs and redesigning jobs in times of change they need to ensure that the job role is designed to:

1. Influence skill variety, provide opportunities for people to do a variety of tasks.
2. Influence task identity, combine tasks.
3. Influence task significance, to inform people of the importance of their work.
4. Influence autonomy, giving people responsibility for their own work.
5. Influence feedback, establish open feedback channels.

The design of jobs themselves is important to the level of engagement and ultimately has an impact on health. It is important to create a job so that an employee can enjoy challenging work and to be able to broaden their skill set and to use their full skills and capabilities. By taking this into account in job design it is providing for job enrichment. The purpose of job enrichment is to maximise the interest and challenge of the work for an employee. It increases motivation and stimulation within an individual and engages the employee in their job thus providing for better productivity for the company. Both sides are gaining. As stated by Beardwell, Holden and Claydon (2004, p. 552):

“Its about designing jobs that employees can own”.

It is also important that employees are clear about what is expected of them in their job and that they receive regular and timely motivational and developmental feedback. These are all key factors in employee engagement. Employees want to feel that the work they do contributes to the overall bottom line of the purpose of the organisation. They want to know that their work has meaning to it and ultimately helps the organisation achieve its mission. They want to be proud of who they work for. By designing and structuring jobs that uses an individual’s skills and capabilities the company are building on their employer branding. An effective employer brand is a set of attributes and qualities that make an organisation

attractive and distinctive to potential and existing employees. It is ultimately about as stated by Cooke, (2008, p. 91):

“The companies image as seen through the eyes of its employees and potential hires”.

By designing jobs that are taking account of employees needs and challenging them is adding to their overall brand as companies who people would most likely want to work for.

2.7 Employee development

This is a significant toll for engagement and recognition of employees. It is important for an employee to have a self development plan in place. Employees like to know where they are going in terms of their development. As stated by Cook (2008, p. 142):

“There needs to be ready access to training and development that meets an individual’s needs”.

This builds both organisational capability as well as individual skills. By providing development for all employees it creates self worth and makes employees feel they are a valuable member of staff and increases their sense of loyalty and commitment to the organisation. As stated in an article by Hayes (2007, p. 44):

“Successful businesses treat employee training and development as an essential investment”.

By offering career development plans for all employees is a way of offering opportunities to grow, learn and ultimately progress within the organisation. There is a strategic importance of learning and development for organisations.

People are the source of differentiation and sustainable competitive advantage. The continuous learning and development of individuals is crucial and is of a high strategic importance to organisations and to the overall economy. Career development gives individuals the encouragement they need if they are to fulfil their potential and achieve a successful career with the organisation in tune with their talents and aspirations. By following this approach companies will find that they are looking after the needs of staff and showing that the company has a commitment to them. This will help to build a psychological contract and hence contribute to the overall strategic business goal of competitive advantage. As stated by Arthur (2008, p. 45):

“Career development opportunities show to employees that they can have a future in the organisation”,

Thus engaging them. Coaching and training ensure that employees have the technical skills necessary to do their job effectively. Wider development provides them with personal skills and business knowledge to improve their contribution to the company. Career development opportunities show to employees that the company considers their career aspirations and that they have a future in the organisation and that they have excellent career advancement opportunities. It all contributes to engaging the employee. If employees feel that the organisation is committed to them, they are more likely to show increased commitment in return. Managers need to realise that if no one-to-one time is given in relation to an employees performance and development, performance will quickly start to drift and motivational levels fall. In an example of a case study of AXA in Cook (2008, P. 147), when AXA introduced a new performance management system several years ago, they made it part of a managers objective to hold four performance reviews with their staff each year. Setting out defined goals and development opportunities for employees to achieve.

Even in a downturn like now, where companies are making people redundant, this can have a negative impact on remaining employees. They may feel vulnerable and overworked and very much disengaged. Therefore, even if job security cannot be guaranteed moving into the future, development of remaining employees is ever more important. Companies need to commitment to them and try to up skill people to make them more employable in the likelihood that they lose their jobs. Employees are more likely then to continue to be engaged in their roles if they see that the organisation still has a commitment to them and are doing their best for them in terms of their development. Also as workers gain clarity and confidence in themselves in their future they become more engaged – a key determinant of business success and profitability.

2.8 Relationships with management

As the concept of employee engagement has increased in recent years the role of management has evolved accordingly. There is a link between management and employee engagement. The requirement for management to become the central point of contact for employees regarding their development, performance and reward is more evident. Some managers are not aware of the impact that their management style has on employees. It is

important that management know how to interact with their employees through communicating, motivating them, rewarding and developing them. Management need to be able to carry out all aspects of people management. The impact of organisational management cannot be underestimated. It is important that managers know how to deal and handle employees accordingly to make a more effective contribution to the organisation. As stated by Arthur (2008, p. 18):

“The importance of management in the development of positive working relationships influences well-being at work”.

The role of leaders and managers lies at the heart of employee engagement. In evaluating engagement from an employee perspective, employees consider their relationship with their manager to be crucial to their success. They need to believe that their manager is setting them up for success. The values and behaviours of employees have to be role-modelled by managers and their commitment to employee communication and dialogue is crucial. As stated in an article by Alimo-Metcalfe and Bradley (2008, p. 38):

“For the effects of engagement to be sustained, it is crucial to embed the leadership behaviours that promote it in the culture of the organisation. To be effective, therefore, any interventions designed to create such a culture must start with the CEO and the top team”.

Employees engagement with their work is influenced by their relationships with their managers. Employees are as interested as managers in working for a positive and engaged organisation. Working with a disengaged team can be stressful and difficult. Managers need to be aware that the most valuable source of competitive advantage is a workforce that consistently and willingly performs to their best. Engagement levels are not helped in organisations where managers do not demonstrate that they care about their employees. Fundamental to the overall engagement that an employee has is that their direct manager cares about them as a person. One of the most powerful means of creating stronger ties in a team is for the manager and team members to find out more about each other as people. Showing an interest in others emotional and physical well-being is fundamental to employee engagement so managers need to be able to know how to create this connection. When there is low morale amongst employees and teams it is important that middle management understand their roles and that the motivation of the workforce is their responsibility. As stated by Macleod and Brady (2008, p. 202):

“It isn’t the chief executive standing on the stage once a year and doing an annual review, it’s the person that you see every day that is responsible for inspiring enthusiasm for work”.

Good managers have the power to create the conditions within engagement behaviours can flourish.

2.9 Flexible working and work-life balance initiatives

Many people nowadays need to combine work with family responsibility and consequently need to achieve a sensible and satisfactory balance between the two. Work-life balance (WLB) initiatives support staff on a personal level and it encourages a healthy work-life balance by allowing staff to combine employment with other aspects of their lives. As stated on the Work-life Balance website, companies can benefit from these work-life balance policies and it helps to build a more supportive culture and develops a more motivated, committed and productive workforce who feel valued and supported by their organisation. Some of the benefits of promoting a work-life balance can be that:

- Employees are more likely to demonstrate more loyalty and commitment to the employer if the employer is showing consideration for their needs.
- Increased loyalty and commitment lead to better performance at an individual level and thus increased productivity at an organisational level.
- There will be a decrease in sickness absence and its associated costs.
- There will be lower staff turnover, substantially reducing the employers recruitment, induction and training costs.
- A more relaxed and flexible workplace culture can encourage employees to come forward with ideas and suggestions for improvement, which in turn can benefit the organisation.
- The employer will become an employer of choice and will be able to retain and attract the best people.

Flexible working needs to be done in a way so that all employees believe they can access the benefits should they need to. In a recent CIPD survey, two of the major concerns that emerged most frequently from companies were the hours and the work intensity level required by the employees, which was contributing to stress levels. Employers have a responsibility for the health of their employees whilst they are in the workplace and by

introducing WLB this can help to alleviate stresses at work. The value employers get back from this is the retention of staff and not having to incur high recruitment and selection costs as well as time spent on induction. What companies have trained and developed in terms of staff they need to hold on to, their intellectual property. They need to reap the benefits that they have invested in. By allowing employees have greater flexibility in working patterns they can balance what they do at work with responsibilities and interests they have outside of work. As stated by CIPD:

“Its about finding out about employees needs and priorities and considering how they can be met in ways that are consistent with the needs of the business”.

Work-life balance initiatives retain valued staff and raise employee engagement. Research carried out by Watson and Wyatt found that employees who were satisfied with stress levels and work-life balance were less likely to leave for a comparable job elsewhere and were more likely to be advocates for the employer. As stated by McDonald (2005, p. 30):

“Managers should offer employees choice, if possible as to their working patterns and number of hours, they should encourage alternative ways of working, such as job-sharing, home working and the introduction of flexible working hours”.

By having flexible working arrangements will allow a company to provide a more responsive service to their customers in addition to increasing production processing time through a variety of shift and other working arrangements.

Overall, work-life balance policies and programmes foster good employee relations within companies. They have positive impact all round both for employee and company. In a case study of PriceWaterHouse Coopers, they found a connection between employee engagement and health and safety at work. They emphasise to employees that it is not healthy for employees to overwork. The message that they give out to employees is that it is the quality of the work that is done rather than the time spent at work. They support a healthy lifestyle. Employers who want to get the most out of their employees need to consider the negative consequences of allowing or condoning workaholic habits. Employers need to ensure that there is a reasonable balance there for their employees. Failure for employers to look after their employees well-being represents a lost opportunity, as staff who feel fit and healthy will be empowered to produce high-quality work, cope well with pressure and work in partnership with the organisation to achieve its goals.

NUKUNA SMURFIT LIBRARY
NATIONAL COLLEGE
OF IRELAND



2.10 Communication processes

It makes sense that people who are involved and kept in the picture feel part of things and are able to do their jobs to the best of their ability. The opposite – a secretive climate, where people are kept in the dark, receiving little regular communication – makes people feel left out, vulnerable and exposed. As stated by Cooke (2008, p. 169):

“This fuels an us and them atmosphere of mistrust”.

Typical problems faced by employees are that there is either too much information or a scarcity of it. Management set the tone for engagement in any organisation. What they say and do is critical in driving higher levels of employee engagement. Good two-way communications are required so that management can keep employees informed of the policies and plans affecting them and employees can react promptly with their views about managements proposals and actions. Change in an organisation cannot be managed effectively if there is not an understanding of the feelings of those who are going to be affected by it. Internal communication is key to engaging with employees and creating and maintaining a supportive organisational culture.

Management need to communicate the vision of the company to employees, the direction that the company wants to go in and where it wants to be. By management communicating the vision of the company it provides employees with a picture of a future state to which the organisation is striving. Organisations with successful employee engagement programmes use their vision statements to paint a clear picture of where the organisation wants to be. Employees should be encouraged to put forward ideas about how they could improve the way they work to go along with these visions. To encourage participation and involvement management need to keep employees involved by using a variety of different communication channels to get their message across in an interactive way and by allowing staff members to question senior management so they have a better understanding of business rationale. This method makes information much more understandable and meaningful.

There are a number of communication methods such as in-house intranet systems, staff / team meetings, corporate newsletters, email, personal voice messages, notice boards, employee annual reports and corporate video. One to one communication is important but companies can use all of the above to inform employees of key corporate goals and how they relate to individuals jobs. The most important thing is that the information is presented in an

interactive and participative fashion and that staff have an opportunity to ask questions and contribute ideas. The important thing is in times of change in an organisation is that the company brings the employees along the change journey with them. The important thing is not to keep them in the dark as it only creates suspicion and causes resistance. Open channels of communication between managers and employees is key. Front line managers are key to ensuring information is communicated effectively to employees, as employees will look to them in times of change to want to find out how change will impact on them.

2.11 Reward and recognition

The issue of reward is at the centre of the employment relationship. The reward package is important to the employer because it helps attract and retain employees and to influence performance and behaviour at work. The reward system should encourage staff to make full use of their abilities and to develop their potential and to achieve both objectives of their job and the organisation. This should be part of the organisational strategy to engage employees. Believing that you are being fairly rewarded and recognised for the amount of work and effort that you put into a job is a key driver of engagement. As Armstrong states (2003, p. 613):

“Reward management is concerned with the formulation and implementation of strategies and policies that aim to reward people fairly, equitably and consistently in accordance with their value to the organisation”.

In IBEC when it comes to salaries, everyone is on different pay. There is no structure in place for pay scales in relation to job roles. It is very much under the carpet as to what one employee gets and what another employee gets. From the offset and just from hearing employees talk in IBEC there is some inequality in terms of what one person gets paid and another gets paid for the same similar work. This creates feelings of resentment and annoyance.

Organisations can use a number of reward systems including attendance, loyalty and sales. Clearly base salary is important and compensation has always been in the top characteristics that are important to job satisfaction. Other incentives can include bonuses, benefits and equity. A range of small and large gifts and public recognition of effort can also be used. Employees today tend to look at the total work package that is on offer. A flexible benefits package is becoming more common and gives an individual freedom to make choices on how

to divide up the rewards according to their priorities at that point in time. Organisations need to give careful consideration to the range of reward that they offer employees. As stated by Cook (2008, p. 160), she believes the following:

“My advice on rewards is to carry out a systematic and at least annual benchmark of remuneration to ensure that compared to your peer groups your policies are fair”.

Therefore, there can be no feelings of bitterness and unfairness that fester bad feelings inside. As Armstrong states (2003, p. 613):

“Reward management is an integral part of an HRM approach to managing people”.

Equally important is the whole topic of recognition. The worst thing a manager can do is ignore an employee's good effort or achievement. Recognition should be management's most fundamental communication with staff telling teams and individuals whether their activities are on target and indicating the value of employees' contribution to the company. Recognising employees is a delicate business and it needs to be done right and it needs to be sincere. Giving praise for good work done creates a positive and innovative culture in an organisation and if it is done correctly it can focus staff's attention on the strategic goals of the organisation. An effective but overlooked approach is to have a senior manager or CEO acknowledge the contribution of an employee, based on feedback from that employee's manager. One of the benefits of praise is that it releases a chemical in the brain called dopamine. This produces a feel good factor which in turn promotes positive emotions. It builds self esteem and confidence of employees. The higher the level of positive emotions employees feel, the more engaged they are with the organisation. Managers need to be aware that just giving praise at the annual performance review does not equate to adequate. They need to do it on a regular basis when good work is done. As stated by Cooke (2008, p. 161):

“Receiving recognition or praise for doing good work can increase productivity and revenue by between 10 and 20 per cent”.

Often a genuine “thank you” is really appreciated and managers should never underestimate the power of what a simple thank you can do.

Feedback is critical to employees, whether negative or positive, it lets them know how they are doing and whether they are on the right track or not and if not then to build the basis for improvement. Feedback helps managers maintain and improve employees performance and in creating engagement. When it comes to using reward and recognition initiatives they must be used fairly and equitably. If they are not used in that manner then they should not be used

at all. Companies need to have clear processes in place to reward and recognise the people who perform well. Training and career development, and aligning rewards are generally key. Reward and recognition play a part in engaging employees in the workplace but it needs to be fair and across broad.

This chapter has explained what employee engagement is and the business case for it for an organisation and what it can bring to an employee and the benefits that it can bring to both parties. Raising engagement levels and maintaining them takes time, effort, commitment and investment. As we have discussed it is a two way process, the organisation must work to engage employee who in turn has a choice about the level of engagement that they offer to the employer. The next chapter will outline the methodology for carrying out the research to get answers to see if employee engagement actually exists in IBEC.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Relevance of research

To research employee engagement practices in IBEC, the information must first be collected before it can be interpreted. As in any other field, in employee engagement, what gets measured gets attention. To find out how engaged employees are they have to be asked and listened to. This then forms the basis for analysis of what impact engagement levels are having on IBEC and for decisions on what actions will help to improve them. Gathering information in a structured way gives reliable measurement and a representative view of a current situation. The main source for the collection of the raw data will be fellow work colleagues. As previously mentioned in chapter 1 (1.3), there is a problem with staff feeling apprehensive and scared about the future of their employment in IBEC because of the current economic climate that we find ourselves in. Therefore, it is going to be very difficult for staff members to feel happy and engaged in their work. The way management lead and communicate to employees in these times is vital if they want to achieve competitive advantage in these harsh times. Therefore, the relevance of this research is to see what they are doing and what engagement practices they have in place if any. A company needs to have engaged employees to have a good business. It is important to find this out if IBEC are going to be able to trade through this recession and to be able to come out doing well on the other side and this all depends on the staff they employ and how happy they are in their jobs in order to perform well. It is therefore employee opinions that are the critical element here to find out our answers.

3.2 Method of research

Questionnaires are going to be the main source of data collection. It is a survey that is going to be completed on paper. The survey is going to be distributed to different employee levels such as Executive Support, Officers, Executives, Senior Executives, Assistant Directors and Directors. Each person will be asked to respond to the same set of questions in a predetermined order. It is important to get different views from across the organisation to give me a broader outlook on engagement practices. This will allow me to obtain information from staff to give me a current view to see whether employee engagement actually exists in IBEC. I would propose to explore the scope of their experiences and analyse the information to gain a better understanding of it. It is necessary for me to do this before I can put forward any recommendations to IBEC so they can improve on employee engagement. This questionnaire method of data collection is known as quantitative. The

choice of questionnaire that I am going to use is self-administered, delivery and return through internal post questionnaire. This is a questionnaire that I am going to deliver by hand to each respondent and ask them to put it into an internal IBEC envelope and return it to myself. I will have a return date wrote on the front cover of the questionnaire so they know what date that I need to have it completed by and returned back to me. As stated by Babbie (1998, p.176):

“This method of questionnaire style overall seems to produce a higher completion rate than do most surveys”.

By using questionnaires, I can assess information from a large group. It produces quantitative data, which is easy to analyse. As stated by Garavan, Hogan and Cahir-O'Donnell, (2003, p.157):

“It is an economical way of surveying many people”.

It enables individuals to complete questionnaires at their own pace and all respondents are asked a same serious of questions. The advantages of using questionnaires are as follows, it is inexpensive to produce and administer and it is a reliable means for gathering quantitative feedback. It is non-obtrusive and it is relatively simple and straightforward and does not require an excessive amount of an individual's time.

I am going to construct a questionnaire that consists of a combination of descriptive / categorical questions, which are questions that can be ranked into a particular category. I am also using open questions. These are usually a respondent's view to a question and I am also going to use closed questions, which are pre-determined answers, being Yes or No answers. This method of data collection will allow me to analyse the information numerically and apply statistical evidence through the use of representing the data I receive back through various different charts to make it easy to read and understand.

3.3 Questionnaire format

It is important that the format of the questionnaire is laid out properly. The format of a questionnaire is just as important as the nature and wording of the questions asked. If a questionnaire is not laid out properly, it can lead to respondents missing questions and confusing them as to the nature of the data required and in some cases throwing the questionnaire away. Because a participant is not answering directly to me I need to take extra

care to ensure the questions are relevant, free from jargon and ambiguity and without double-barrel items. Therefore, before I use the questionnaire to carry out the research and collect the raw data, I will issue a pilot test first. As quoted by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003, p.308):

“Do your best to give the questionnaire a trial run, as without a trial run, you have no way of knowing your questionnaire will succeed”.

The advantages of administering a pilot test of my questionnaire will ensure that the respondents will have no problems completing the questionnaire and so there will be no problems in recording the data collected. It tests the language, sequence, layout of the questionnaire and it will highlight any ambiguities or problems. Another advantage of using a pilot questionnaire is that of reliability. No instrument can measure with one hundred percent accuracy. However, by using a pilot test, this can help to stamp out this degree of error. It will identify the errors. As a result of administering a pilot run, amendments can then be made to the questionnaire if need be making it more reliable.

I have asked respondents to answer 15 questions and kept it to a minimum of 2 pages, which is deemed to be a reasonable length survey. As Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill state (2003, p.304):

“In general we have found that a length of between four and eight pages has been acceptable for within organisation self-administered questionnaires”.

My survey will be shorter so it will not discourage people from filling it out. I have wrote a note on the first page of the questionnaire at the top of the page to explain the purpose and objective of the survey as this intends to encourage more people to complete the survey if they know what it is about. I will also ensure to people that it is strictly confidential.

When I have all the surveys back I can then analyse the data which will then allow me to put forward recommendations for improvement. I will also use certain theorists beliefs and also use case studies of other organisations for comparison of their employee engagement methods to help put forward recommendations for improving things so IBEC will be able to see the advantages of having a better engaged employee workforce. I believe that there is scope for improving employee engagement in IBEC through investigating what is currently ongoing and then putting forward recommendations for enhancing the current systems.

3.4 Reliability and validity

Reliability of the survey is so important because of its relationship with the validity of the findings from the questionnaire. Validity of the questionnaire is concerned with its relevance and the extent to what information that I have designed the questionnaire for, which is to find out what the current engagement practices are in IBEC, so that I can put forward valid recommendations for improvement. By carrying out the pilot test, it will ensure reliability and validity of the questionnaire that I have constructed. It will ensure that I have the appropriate questionnaire in place for my research aims and it will allow me to investigate the areas that I am looking to improve.

3.5 Ethical considerations

There are also ethical considerations that have to be taken into account when carrying out research. Surveys can be a form of intrusion into an individual's life. As quoted by Babbie (1998, p. 338):

“Survey research almost always represents an intrusion into peoples lives”.

Surveys are an activity that the respondent has not requested and it is asking them to reveal personal information. Survey research should never injure or damage the respondent who has volunteered to co-operate and help answer the survey. They should not endanger the respondent in any way. As quoted by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2003, p. 105):

“The general ethical issue here is that the research design should not subject the research population to any embarrassment or any other material disadvantage”.

Therefore, I have ensured that the questionnaire that I have constructed is non-obtrusive and it is a voluntary questionnaire to fill out. It is important to inform the respondents about the aspects of the research, about the nature of the research, about requirements of taking part, about implications of taking part and about use of the data collected and the way in which it will be reported. This I have explained on the first page of the questionnaire to all respondents.

To ensure full co-operation with respondents it is important to ensure confidentiality. Because of the data that I am looking for from people there are some sensitivities around it. Staff members will not want me to know who said what. Quantitative surveys can guarantee anonymity. I will not provide identification codes on the questionnaires and I will just put them into envelopes, hand them out, and ask respondents to send them back to me in internal

mail envelopes so their identity will be kept private. When I get the questionnaire back I will file them and not make them available to anyone but myself for data analysis purposes only. Once given, a promise on my part not to reveal identities it must be kept and honoured. When the results of the data are analysed then participants of the survey will not be identifiable.

3.6 Analysis of the information received

In planning my survey I need to decide how the responses will be collated and analysed. My survey is going to be paper based so I will be doing data entry onto an excel spreadsheet to collect my answers. I will be getting percentages showing how each respondent answered each questions. This will highlight the most positive answers and the most negative answers. As I mentioned earlier I am going to analyse the information numerically and apply statistical evidence through the use of representing the data I receive back through various different charts to make it easy to read and understand.

3.7 To conclude on methodology

By following all the methodology steps discussed above it will allow me to explore the scope of the experiences from work colleagues and it will help me to gain a better understanding of the employee engagement practices at present in IBEC. It is necessary for me to do this so I can my collect my data, analyse it and discuss it, which I will doing in the next chapter and then put forward recommendations in chapter 5 to enhance the current systems and there is always scope for improving things.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 The response

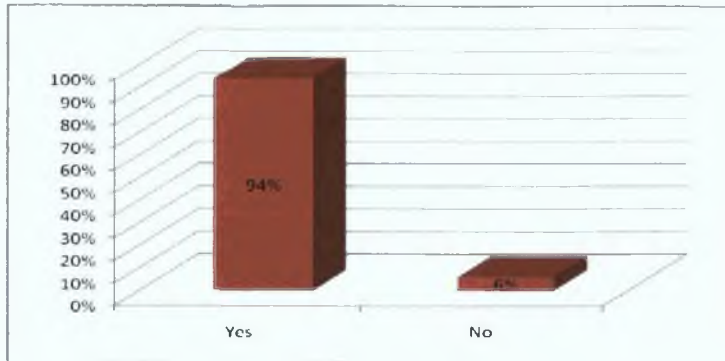
Of the 40 questionnaires that I distributed to staff, I got an 82% response rate back. This good response rate was because of the chosen method of questionnaire style that was chosen to carry out which was, a delivery by hand and return through internal post style and total confidentiality with no coding or names on the questionnaire, to ensure that staff would feel comfortable about participating in the survey. In this chapter, I will discuss the findings of my questionnaires and I will identify what the levels of employee engagement are in IBEC and what areas are contributing to some employees not being engaged in their work.

From the findings of the survey I carried out it has become very apparent that IBEC do not have a consistent employee engagement practices in place. Everyone appears to have different experiences in different departments and depending on what level job you hold. Surely, it would be better if IBEC had the correct method of engagement practices in place and regardless of what level of job you hold or what department you work in, it should be consistent across the organisation. There should be set practices in place to try and engage employees from the very start when they commence a new job, through to aiding them to get settled in and knowing what to do in their job, through to motivating them, encouraging them and having development plans in place for them and allowing for work-life balance. I am now going to discuss some of the findings from the survey.

4.2 Findings on when an individual starts a new job

As we spoke of in chapter two it is important that new recruits are given a thorough induction and training in to a new workplace. Induction is about giving a new employee the basic information they need to enable them to settle down quickly and happily and to become productive as soon as possible. The first few days of an individuals experience in a new job sets their tone of attitude towards the organisation. By giving them the appropriate training, it will allow them to become productive as soon possible and help them to settle in quicker. It is important for employees to know what is expected of them in their new jobs to enable them to have an understanding of what it is they have to achieve in their role and only by induction and other forms of training will that happen. Results from the survey highlighted that 94% of employees in IBEC know what is expected of them in their roles and 6% of employees do not know what is expected of themselves in their roles. This is represented in figure 1 on the next page.

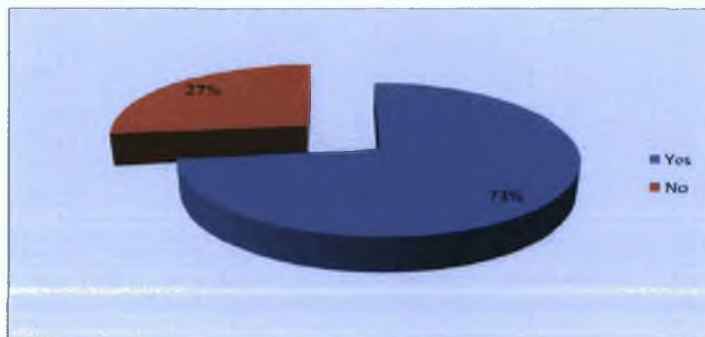
Figure 1- Employees who know what is expected of them in their jobs



The results show quite a positive response here, however there should be no employees who do not know what is expected of them in their role. All employees should have clarity on that. This straight away sets a barrier against engagement to exist if an individual is unsure of what it is they should be doing in their job.

It has become apparent from the research that 73% of employees were given training to help them do their job when they started in IBEC and the other 27% of the respondents said that they did not receive any training to help them settle into their new job when they started. Figure 2 demonstrates this below.

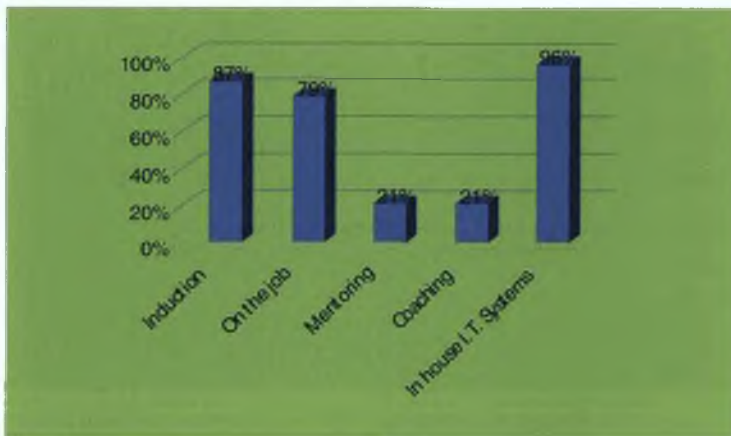
Figure 2 - The percentage of people who felt that they received appropriate training and development when they started their job



People who do not receive the correct training and development when starting a new job can cause stress to an individual. People are eager to learn during this stage to reduce any levels of anxiety that they may be experiencing. When starting a new job the process can either be a smooth one or a person can feel like they have been submerged into deep water.

Of the 73% of employees who did receive training to help them do their job when they started, majority of them underwent a combination of training activities. Figure 3 below highlights the training that employees received. 87% of people went through the induction process, which is good. Although there is no excuse for any employee not to have gone through an induction process as the importance of it cannot be understated. 79% of people received on the job training. 21% of people received mentoring training, where experienced employees find value in contributing to the development of newer colleagues. 21% of the respondents who received training underwent coaching, which is the process of directing, instructing and training a person to extract the best from them and to unlock their true potential in order to maximise performance. Finally 96% of people underwent the in-house I.T. systems training. This is a necessity, as without that training they could simply do nothing. However, why 4% of respondents did not receive the in-house I.T. systems training is a mystery as this is the very basic level of training required.

Figure 3 - Types of training employees received when they started their job



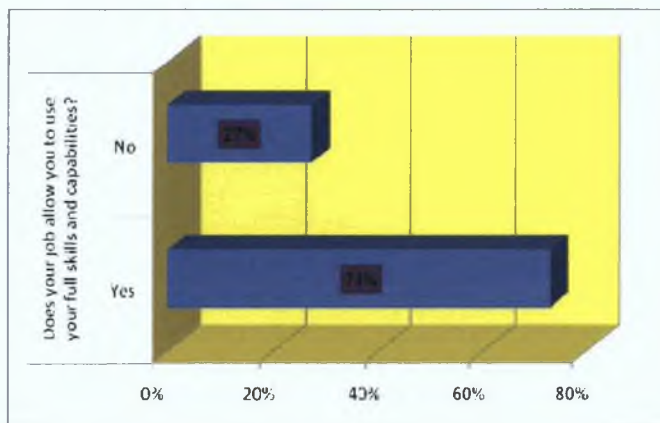
If these are peoples experiences so far, it becomes highlighted that from the beginning of the employment relationship that IBEC are not fully committing to employees. They are not engaging with all employees from the offset. Although majority of employees have received training from the beginning the percentage of those who have not IBEC are failing to commit to and it is more unlikely that those employees will be willing to commit in return to the organisation. As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.5), induction and training into a new job is the beginning of the engagement process and it allows the company to send the right message

across that the company cares about their new employees by equipping them with the tools they need to be able to start their new job. We also spoke of how the first few weeks in a new job are vital, by paying attention to induction and training programmes the employee is less likely to leave the company.

4.3 Findings from when employees are carrying out their jobs

There are various factors that employers have to take account of when they are designing jobs to allow for an individual to use their full skill set and capabilities to ensure that an employee stays fully focused, motivated and engaged in their job. We highlight in chapter 2 (2.6), that in order for that to happen employers must design jobs to allow for skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. I asked participants of the survey did they feel their job allowed them the opportunity to use their full skills and capabilities. What is highlighted in figure 4 below is that 73% of respondents said yes that their job did allow for them to use their full skills and capabilities. However, 27% of respondents said that the job that they carry out does not give them the opportunity to use their full skill set and capabilities. Although a relatively high number of employees in IBEC do have the opportunity to use their full skill set it is saddening to see that 27% of employees don't.

Figure 4 - Employees who use their full skills and capabilities in their job and those who don't



From asking an open question to those respondents who said that no their jobs do not allow them to use their full skill set and capabilities, the reasons are because the role they carry out which is Executive Support does not allow for it. One respondent stated that they are very defined and limited in their roles in terms of the work content they are allow to do although being capable of more. Others stated that they have qualifications that they are not being able to put to use. Of the 27% of respondents that are not allowed to use their full skill set

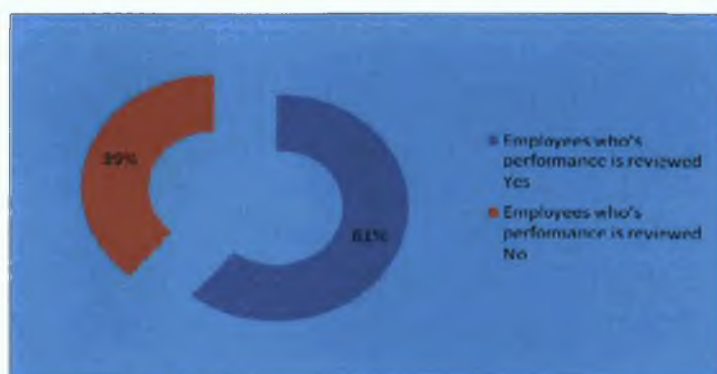
all of these employees carry out an Executive Support role level in the organisation. This is highlighting that IBEC do not allow for job satisfaction and variety and do not give much consideration for lower level job design.

Respondents were asked did they feel that their job contributed to IBEC's overall mission. 73% of people said that yes they felt their job contributed to IBEC's mission and 27% of respondents said no they felt that their job did not contribute to IBEC's overall mission. Of the respondents who answered no, 24% of them were Executive Support level staff and 3% were officer level staff. As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.6), employees want to know that the work they do contributes to the overall bottom line of the purpose of the organisation. They need to know that their work has significance to it and helps the organisation achieve its mission. They want to be proud of the work they do. What IBEC need to realise here is that regardless of what level job you hold, all jobs need variety, autonomy, identity, significance and feedback.

4.4 Findings in relation to receiving feedback and recognition

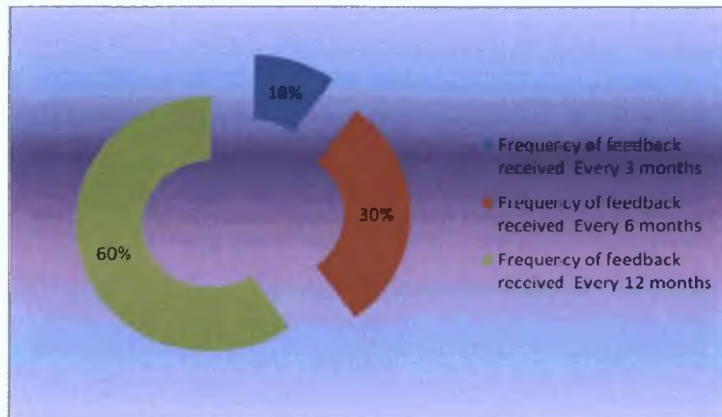
It has become apparent from the findings of the survey that some supervisors / management in IBEC do give feedback on a one to one basis on how employees are performing in their jobs and others don't. Feedback is critical to employees, whether negative or positive, it lets them know how they are doing and whether they are on the right track or not and if not then to build the basis for improvement. Feedback helps managers maintain and improve employees performance and in creating engagement. Figure 5 below demonstrates from the findings of the survey that 61% of respondents stated that their manager gives them feedback on a one to one basis on how they are performing and 39% stated that their manager gives them no feedback on their work.

Figure 5 - Employees responses to whether or not they receive feedback



This is a high number of people not receiving feedback. Of the 61% of people who stated that they do receive feedback from their manager they were asked how often they received it. Figure 6 below shows us that 10% of them said they get feedback every three months, 30% receive it every six months and 60% every twelve months.

Figure 6 - Frequency of feedback received



Giving feedback or holding performance reviews is a basic requirement that all managers need to do and as we spoke of in Chapter 2 (2.11), managers need to be aware that just giving the annual performance review does not equate to adequate. They need to do it on a regular basis and it needs to be constructive. The inconsistency in relation to performance and feedback process in IBEC is showing up as a haphazard approach. Some managers take part in it and others not. This is clearly a leadership issue not being modelled down from the top senior management. There is no fairness or structure in place in terms of any of the practices. As stated by Cooke (2008, p. 147):

“If one to one time with the manager is not built into everyones diary, performance quickly starts to drift and motivation levels fall”.

Performance reviews need to be built in as one of a managers objectives, to hold on one to one regular basis with employees. The statistics show us very clearly that this is not happening in IBEC. It all depends on who the manager is whether an employee receives feedback or not and how often.

Respondents to the survey were also asked do they receive praise or recognition for good work that they do. 21% of respondents stated that they received it frequently and 55% said sometimes and 24% said that they never receive it. Managers have a key role in motivating staff and simply by recognising the effort and good work that an employee carries out

motivates them and helps to develop a high performance culture. In chapter 2 (2.11), we said that the worst thing a manager can do is ignore an employees good effort or achievement. Here we have 24% of respondents saying they never get any praise or recognition for good work that they do, hence there are managers in IBEC that simply do not seem to care what type of work employees carry out, it appears to just be taken for granted. Recognition plays a part in engaging employees in the workplace, IBEC management need to realise that often a genuine “thank you” can really be appreciated and they need to start actively giving recognition where it is due and to those who deserve it. This needs to be embedded into the culture though and not just for some managers to do it and others not.

4.5 Findings in relation to personal development

From the findings of the survey, it has become apparent that IBEC do not have personal development plans in place for all of their employees. As we can see represented in figure 7 below, 61% of respondents stated that they do have a personal development plan in place and 39% stated that they have no plan in place. The question is why don't the 39% of people not have a development / career plan in place? By asking an open question allowed me to find out why they had no plan in place and the general feedback was:

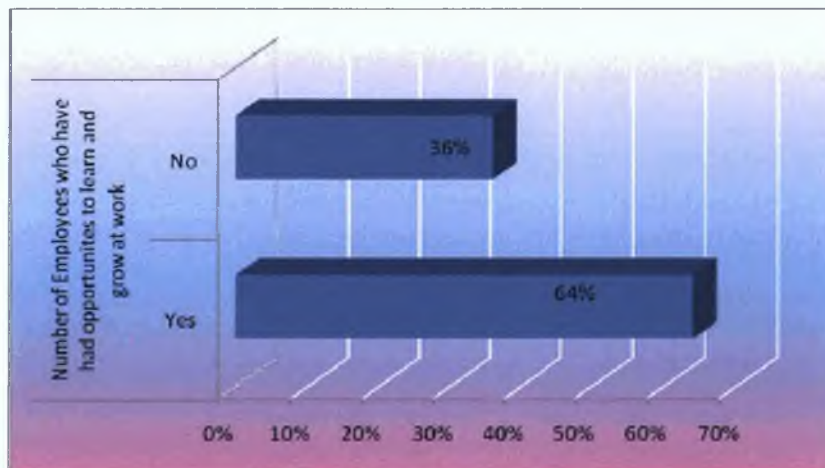
- There was never one put in place for them.
- Their job level does not allow for it.
- They were just too busy in the job they are doing to allow time for a career / development plan.

Figure 7 – Number of employees who have a development plan in place



IBEC need to ensure that there is development plans in place for all their employees. Again, inconsistency is being brought to forefront in terms of differing practices for different employees. It is important for IBEC to encourage lifelong learning and it is a very powerful weapon in engagement. Personal and career progression does not have to mean upwards progression. Many people are happy with the level they are at but they may like to have the opportunity for lateral moves. Therefore, it is also just about giving people the opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge so that if the opportunity did come up for lateral moves they could apply for it. The survey also asked employees had they the opportunity to learn and grow in the last year. What was highlighted is represented in figure 8 below is that 64% said yes they have grown and learnt in the last year in work and 36% of people said they had not grown or learnt anything in the last year.

Figure 8 - Employees who have had opportunities at work to learn and grow in the last year

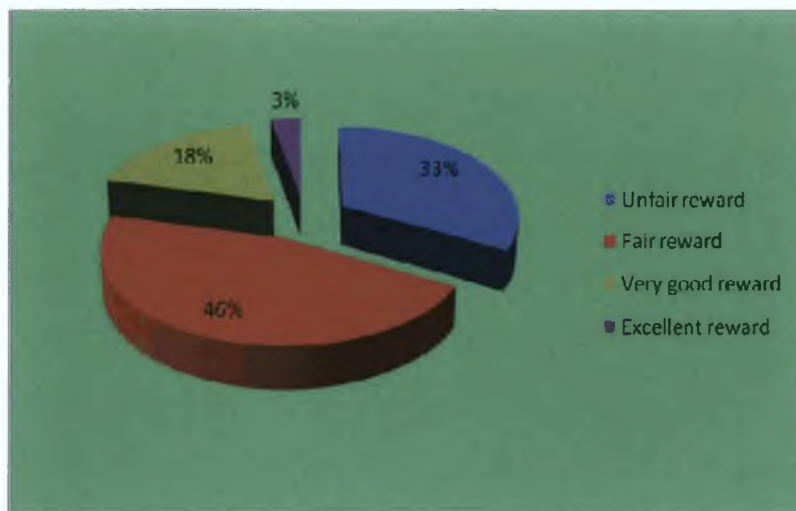


IBEC need to see that learning and development opportunities show employees that the company considers their development aspirations and even though in these difficult economic times where job security cannot be guaranteed, by committing to giving them opportunities to learn new skills and knowledge in other areas and build on what knowledge they currently have that they have a future of being more employable because of their intellectual capital and skill range. It all contributes to engaging the employee. If employees feel that the organisation is committed to them, they are more likely to show increased commitment in return even in harsh times when things seem bleak.

4.6 Findings on rewards and benefits

As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.11), employees want to believe that they are being fairly rewarded and recognised for the amount of work and effort that they put into their jobs. It is a key driver of engagement. From asking a descriptive question of the participants the following results emerged as to whether people felt they were rewarded appropriately for the work they carry out. 33% felt they were rewarded unfairly for the work they do, 46% said they received fair reward, 18% said they received a very good reward and 3% said they receive an excellent reward for the work they carry out. These statistics are represented below in figure 9.

Figure 9 - Statistics of employees on how fairly they feel they are rewarded for their work

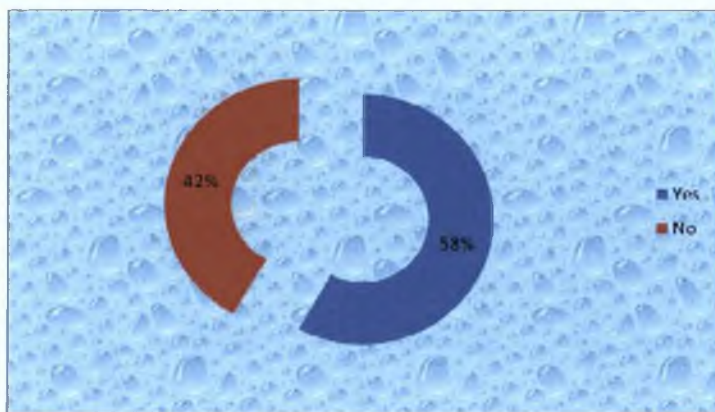


Although they say that salary comes surprisingly low on the list of overall engagement drivers, this is generally because the pay of such respondents is within an acceptable bandwidth for the job they are carrying out. If employers get salary wrong in terms of fairness for similar jobs carried out by employees it can be a significant leak in the company well-being and can create animosity amongst staff and management. Employers need to avoid getting financial and non-financial rewards wrong. They need to be fair and similar depending on the level of job. It can be very demotivating for employees if they feel they are not being rewarded fairly for what they do and this will affect employee engagement with the company. Of those 33% of employees who responded saying they felt they are rewarded unfairly, IBEC need to find out why these employees feel that way. It is important for all employees to feel that they are being rewarded fairly.

4.7 Findings on relationships with management

Relationships with management can effect employee engagement. It is so important that management know how to interact with their employees and that they have proper people management skills. As we stated in chapter in 2 (2.8), employees need to feel that their managers are setting them up for success. What is highlighted from the findings of the survey is that 58% of employees felt that their manager cared about them as a person and how they were doing in their job. 42% of employees felt that their manager did not care about them at all or how they were doing in their job. Figure 10 below represents these statistics.

Figure 10 - Employees who feel their supervisor cares about them as a person & how they are doing in their job



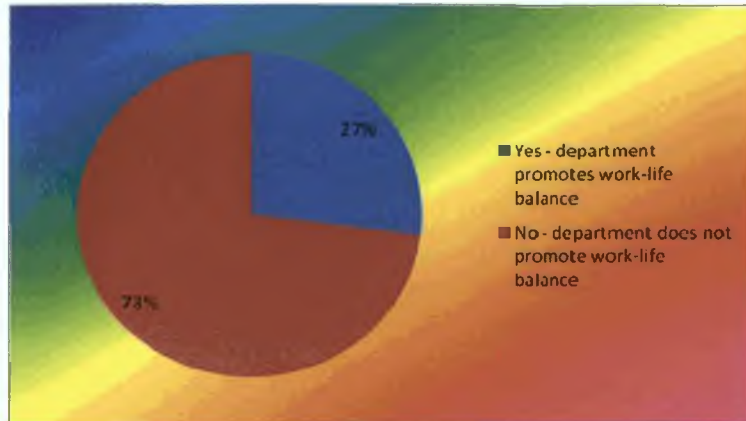
The results are very high from respondents who feel that their manager has no interest in them. IBEC need to address this if this is the case as engagement levels are not helped in organisations where managers do not demonstrate that they care about their employees. One of the most fundamental things for engagement is that an employee has a manager that cares about them as a person. Showing an interest in employees and their work and getting to know them as a person and their well-being is fundamental to employee engagement so managers need to be able to know how to create this connection.

4.8 Findings on work-life balance initiatives

What is highlighted in the findings on work-life balance practices in IBEC is extremely negative. There are practically no provisions for work-life balance for employees in IBEC. As represented in figure 11 on the next page, 27% of respondents stated that the department

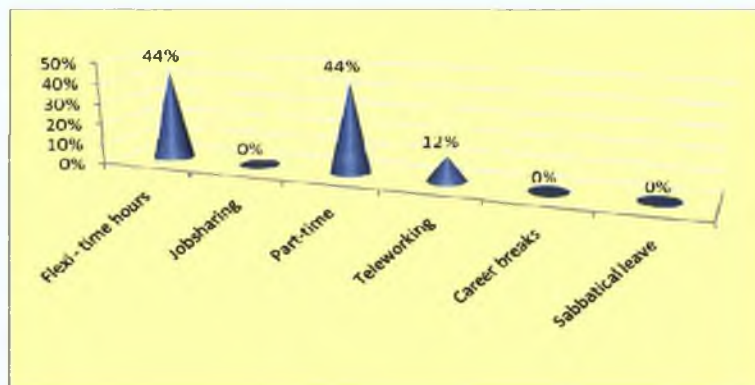
they work in promotes work-life balance. However, the other 73% of respondents stated that no they do not benefit from work-life balance practices.

Figure 11 - Respondents who avail of work-life balance



It seems bizarre that only some employees can avail of the benefit of work-life balance. IBEC need to pay attention to the practicalities of employees lives and they are not acting as if their people are important to them. They need to take positive steps to show that they care about their employees well-being. Many people today need to combine work with family responsibilities and IBEC need to be aware of that. Of the 27% of respondents that state that they can avail of work-life balance practices I asked a categorical question of them to state what practise they can avail of. Figure 12 below represents the practices that they can avail of.

Figure 12 - Work - life balance initiatives that 27% of respondents state they can avail of in IBEC



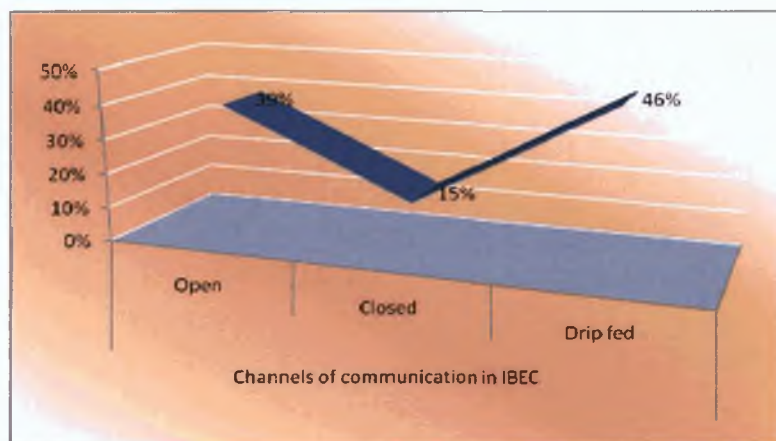
Of the 27% of respondents that said they can avail of work-life balance in their job, 44% of them said that they get flexi-time, 44% of them said they can work part-time and 12% said they can avail of tele-working. Nobody in IBEC could avail of job sharing, career break or

sabbatical leave. If having work-life balance practices within an organisation it needs to be fair and across board. It is not fair just certain areas within the company promoting it and some employees being able to reap the benefits of it. IBEC need to respect the wishes of employees to achieve a fair and reasonable balance between their working lives and their personal time.

4.9 Findings on communications

39% of respondents stated that they felt the lines of communication in IBEC are open. 15% stated that they felt they were closed and 46% felt that communication and information was drip fed to them. This is represented in figure 13 below.

Figure 13 - Communications in IBEC



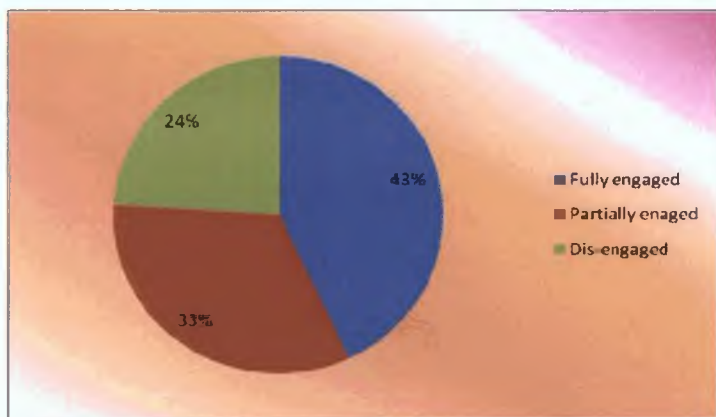
As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.10), in communication processes, good two-way communications are required so that management can keep employees informed of the policies and plans affecting them. The opposite, a secretive climate, where people are kept in the dark and not told anything creates an “us and them” atmosphere of mistrust. The findings highlight that majority of employees are not communicated to in the correct way in IBEC. Some are drip fed information and then others hear nothing. Internal communication is key to engaging with employees and creating and maintaining a supportive organisational culture. Employee trust is gained by making things clear in the organisation. Internal communication processes need to be transparent. But the findings from the survey indicate to us that communications in IBEC are not open and transparent. Especially in these times of change within the organisation due to the recession and the restructuring processes that are going on at present, they need to realise that one of the most important things is not to keep employees

in the dark, this only leads to rumours being spread and issues becoming exaggerated. Openness and honesty go along way and people appreciate it.

4.10 Findings on engagement levels

I asked an outright question to the respondents whether they felt engaged in their current roles or not and the answers I received back are illustrated in figure 14 below.

Figure 14 - Levels of engagement that employees have in their jobs in IBEC



43% of the respondents said that they were fully engaged in their jobs, 33% said that they were partially engaged in their jobs and 24% said they were totally disengaged from their work. This highlights that more than half of the workforce are not totally engaged in their roles. That is not good for IBEC. Imagine what they could achieve if they had a 100% fully engaged workforce. IBEC need to work at swaying the massively ambivalently minded staff. Even the smallish percentage swing towards engagement has the capacity to change the attitudes of a large number of employees. IBEC need to ensure all staff are engaged because in the long run it pays off, employees are willing to go the extra mile for the organisation and willing to put the extra effort in.

This concludes the data analysis chapter and it has highlighted what the main findings of the employee engagement survey have been and where the errors appear to be. Just to recap they are the following:

1. IBEC do not have the same consistent induction and training procedures in place for new employees coming into the organisation.
2. Some staff felt they do not know what is expected of them exactly in their jobs.

3. Some job design does not allow for some employees to use their full skills and capabilities.
4. Some employees do not get feedback on their performance.
5. A lot of employees do not receive recognition for the good work they do.
6. A high number of employees do not have personal development plans in place and have not had opportunities to learn and grow in their roles.
7. A number of people feel like they do not receive fair reward for the work they do.
8. Majority of employees feel their manager does not care about them.
9. There are not fair practices in place for work-life balance were all employees can avail of the benefits of it.
10. The channels of communication are not fully open and transparent between management and employees.
11. Over half the workforce are not fully engaged in their jobs.

Following on from here, in the next chapter I will put forward recommendations to show ways that IBEC can improve on their current employee engagement practices.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions drawn from the data analysis

Although the statistics of the survey did reveal some positive results from some of the respondents, IBEC still have a lot of work to do to improve their employee engagement levels. Some engagement levels do exist among the staff in IBEC however, all employees need to be engaged and not just a few and the survey revealed constant inconsistencies across all the drivers for engagement in the organisation. Every employee has had a different experience in relation to engagement practices in IBEC. One rule for one person, and another for someone else. I draw from there that the inconsistency of practices is contributing to employees not being fully engaged in their jobs. IBEC need to review the practices that they currently have in place to ensure that they can turn this around and engage all employees that they have. As we spoke of in chapter 1 (1.3), IBEC may give out advice and assistance to member companies about employee engagement and what is best practice but it is clearly evident from the findings that they do not follow suit themselves on what they provide advice on to ensure an engaged workforce. It has always been said that an organisation is only as good as the people in it and can only achieve its true potential by harnessing its people. What IBEC need to realise is that every employee has the capacity to be engaged but it is up to the company to institute a culture which encourages them to invest that engagement on the companys behalf. Engagement levels are the companys responsibility, they are something to be worked on, not simply hoped for. The company needs to decide to make an investment in it and the good news is it can happen because the reins to this powerful tool lie in the hands of the company depending on what practices they put in place to allow for it.

5.2 Recommendations for improvement

From the findings of the data analysis I am now going to put forward recommendations that I believe IBEC should follow that will improve employee engagement levels amongst staff. I believe that by following the recommendations that we are about to discuss will increase employee engagement for IBEC in the long-term.

5.3 Recommendations to improve the induction and training process into a new job

What arose from the data analysis was that majority of employees know what is expected of them in their job roles, however, there were some employees who stated that they did not know what was expected of them in their roles when they started their employment in IBEC.

They stated that they did not receive the appropriate training and development when they started. This does not set the beginning of a good working relationship for either party involved which is a downfall on IBEC's behalf here as it is their responsibility to ensure that the appropriate training is in place for new employees. By giving new employees the appropriate training, it will allow them to become productive as soon possible and help them to settle in quicker. It is important for employees to know what is expected of them in their new jobs to enable them to have an understanding of what it is they have to achieve in their role and only by giving induction and other forms of training will that happen.

The results from the survey highlighted that those employees who did receive training underwent various different training methods when they started. However there was no consistent training in place for all employees, everyone had a different experience. IBEC need to put a structure on new employees joining the company. Putting induction and other training systems such as coaching, mentoring and on the job learning in place so that all employees go through the same starting procedures. All employees should receive induction training especially, regardless of what level job they are coming in at. As we described in chapter 2 (2.5), induction is described as the process by which an employee is welcomed into the organisation and introduced to the new working environment. The importance to paying attention to receiving a new employee is very important. It is to ensure the effective integration of staff into the company for the benefit of both parties. A well-planned and structured induction programme is critical in shaping the new employees attitude and potential commitment to the organisation. A few employees did not even receive the in-house I.T. systems training when they started and without that there is very little you can do for a period of time. Therefore, IBEC should focus a lot more on training new employees when they join the organisation. Perhaps spending the first week on induction and training new employees on all I.T. packages required to allow them to start working straight away and then assigning a mentor or a coach to an individual that they can go and seek assistance from when they need it.

As previously stated the benefits of an induction programme for a new employee are that it is giving them the basic information that they require to enable them to settle down quickly and happily and to start work and become as effective as soon as possible. This will allow the new employee to ease more comfortably into the new role and dissolve any stresses they may be experiencing. New employees are eager to learn when they start a new job as it reduces

the stress of the transition process. Without effective induction new employees get off to a bad start and never really understand the organisation and this may lead to poor integration into the team, low moral, particularly for the new employee, loss of productivity and failure to work to their best potential and in extreme cases the employee leaves. The costs incurred then for the organisation are, additional costs for recruiting a replacement, wasted time that was spent on trying to train the new person in, lowers morale of remaining employees and then finally having to repeat the unproductive learning curve of the leaver. I believe that if IBEC pay a little bit more attention to induction and training, the process of when an individual starts a new job will improve greatly and as we spoke of in chapter 4 (4.2), induction and training into a new job is the beginning of the engagement process and it allows the company to send the right message across that the company cares about their new employees by equipping them with the tools they need to be able to start their new job. This is easy to change and will make a big difference both to new employees and the organisation.

5.4 Recommendations to improve the design of jobs

Our survey results showed us that 27% of respondents were not given the opportunity to use their full skill set and capabilities in the job that they are employed to do. This is all a part of an individual's welfare in their job and it is often overlooked. Results from the data analysis have shown us that IBEC are over looking job satisfaction for some of their employees. Part of an employee's well-being is feeling that they have a stimulating and challenging role to carry out. Employees do not like work that is repetitive and boring, it causes them to lose motivation and interest in the job and performance decreases thus resulting in lower productivity for the company. Managers make choices concerning work design that have an impact on workers satisfaction and satisfaction being performance. Management need to design jobs to ensure maximum motivation for an individual. They need to start from an analysis of what work needs to be done and the tasks that have to be achieved. Management should then consider how the jobs can be set up to provide the maximum degree of intrinsic motivation for those who have to carry out the job with a view to improving performance and productivity. As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.6), as stated by Beardwell, Holden and Claydon (2004, p. 552):

“It's about designing jobs that employees can own”,
and by designing jobs that are taking account of employees needs and challenging them is adding to the overall brand of IBEC as a company who people would most likely want to

work for. So when designing the job they need to include task variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. Its about creating a sense of excitement in a job, allowing for responsibility, achievement and recognition. The outcome of this personally for a person then is high intrinsic motivation and work satisfaction.

27% of our respondents also stated that they felt that the work they do does not contribute to IBEC's over all mission. IBEC need to highlight to all staff the significance of their work and how it contributes to the bottom line, to the overall mission. They need to tell employees the importance of their work and give them feedback on the substantial impact that it will have for the company and if they can show them. Employees want to know that the work they do has meaning to it and that it will help the organisation achieve its mission. They want to be proud of what they do.

Excitement in jobs is also created by the quality of leadership and the willingness of management to recognise that they will obtain increased motivation and commitment if they pay attention to the ways in which they delegate responsibility and give staff the scope to use their skills and abilities. By designing jobs that are full of job enlargement, enrichment, allowing for autonomy and giving direct feedback motivates people and is what contributes to keeping a person in job. The results from the survey showed us that in IBEC it is the lower level positions such as Executive Support roles that do not allow for job satisfaction and again Executive Support roles and Officer roles that employees felt their jobs did not contribute to the overall mission of IBEC. Regardless of what job level it is management need to treat them the same when designing jobs. The outcome for the company then is improved higher performance and it can be achieved by giving people the opportunity to perform. Thus strengthening the employee engagement link between employee and employer. Its aligning the two together. This practice is slightly more difficult to change but it will make a big difference in the long run. If IBEC follow the above recommendations for improvement they should see employees who are happier in their job roles and performing better.

5.5 Recommendations to improve giving feedback and recognition

What was highlighted to us in our survey was that 39% of employees do not receive feedback on their performance from their manager. Although 61% of staff did receive it, all staff need

to receive it. People learn from feedback and it lets them know how they are getting on. As we stated in chapter 4 (4.4), giving feedback or holding performance reviews to let people know how they are doing is a basic requirement that all managers need to do. All feedback needs to be constructive. Consistent communication is a crucial means of increasing engagement. This means that just having the yearly performance review is not adequate, feedback needs to be consistent and regular. Of the 61% of respondents that stated they receive feedback some of them receive it twice a year and others three times a year. Again, there are inconsistencies across the organisation. All employees need feedback and coaching from their managers which involves having straight forward conversations on a regular basis. Employees need to feel that their manager cares about their future and how they are doing in the job. As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.11), feedback is crucial for employees to receive back from their manager, whether negative or positive, it lets them know how they are doing and whether they are on the right track or not and if not then to build the basis for improvement. Feedback also helps managers maintain and improve employees performance and in creating engagement. What IBEC need to do here is to ensure that all employees receive feedback and not only a proportion of the workforce. All levels of all employees need to receive it and it needs to be reviewed throughout the year. As Armstrong states, (2003, p. 492):

“Managers need to treat it as continuous process which reflects good management practices”.

Progress reviews can take place informally also, they don't just have to happen at the yearly performance appraisal. It can be through when certain milestones are achieved that feedback is discussed then between manager and employee, informal cups of coffee chats a few times a year or team meetings. IBEC need to know that feedback provides a framework in which they can support their employees rather than dictate to them and it significantly impacts on results if it is regarded as transformational feedback. And again it is a practice that all employees need to go through and not just a few. Whatever practices IBEC implement needs to apply to all staff. By following these recommendations in relation to giving feedback to staff on how they are performing IBEC should see performance improve and employees engagement levels increase in their roles.

Our data also showed to us that not all employees in IBEC receive praise or recognition for good work that they do. Recognition for good work carried out is important. As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.11), the worst thing a manager can do is to ignore an employee's good effort

or achievement. By ignoring it may lead an employee to adapt the attitude “what is the point”. Recognition should be managements’ most fundamental communication with employees. Effective managers need to use various means to build an atmosphere of accomplishment and pride through recognition and appreciation. Good managers will ensure that this occurs. By giving recognition for good work done motivates people to identify more effective ways of doing their jobs. By not recognising it, it can utterly discourage such efforts and as we said above brings on the attitude of “what is the point”. By not receiving praise and recognition for good work done can demoralise employees as they will feel ignored, unappreciated and used. Whereas on the other hand if they make a mistake or when performance drops they are quick to be pulled in and criticised. Therefore, if they are not appreciated for when they do a good job, they will start just to do enough to get by. Their engagement level has fallen beyond the level IBEC want it to be. Management need to give recognition that is genuine and appreciated. There are many ways that they can give this to employees such as:

- Operating employee of the month schemes.
- Promotion - sends out a message that the employee is recognised by their employer.
- Financial rewards – work done that serve both to recognise and reward.
- A meal out amongst the team.
- Formal commendation at a workplace meeting.
- A thank you letter.
- Direct praise from Director General of the company for good work achieved.

Or as previously mentioned in chapter 2 (2.11), Often a genuine “thank you” is really appreciated and managers should never underestimate the power of what a simple thank you can do. By following these recommendations and methods for giving employees praise for good work done they should see motivational levels surge in employees, as they will know what they do is now appreciated, but it needs to apply to all employees.

5.6 Recommendations to improve rewards for employees

The findings of our survey informed us that 33% of respondents felt that they are unfairly rewarded for the work that they do in IBEC. As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.11), employees need to believe that they are being fairly rewarded and recognised for the amount of work and effort that they put into a job. It is a driver for engagement. When it comes to reward

packages it needs to be fair and consistent across the organisation. There should be no inequality in relation to pay for same or similar work being carried out by different people. As we spoke of in chapter 4 (4.6), if employers get salary wrong in terms of fairness for similar jobs carried out by employees it can be a significant leak in the company well-being and can create animosity amongst staff and management. It can be demotivating through a lack of perceived fairness. Employers need to avoid getting financial and non-financial rewards wrong as this has a significant impact on engagement levels then and they end up with disgruntled employees. IBEC need to realise that reward goes beyond the salary aspect of a remuneration package, it extends to other benefits also that employees receive within the organisation such as maternity pay, sick pay, flexible working arrangements, different type of leave entitlements and educational support etc. Employees that have a perception of unfair rewards will withdraw effort in their jobs and most employers would only consider that to be common sense. To prevent the 33% of IBEC employees withdrawing from their jobs and being disgruntled IBEC need to ensure the reward system is fair and equitable that is in place. If needs be they need to review it and it has got to be fair and to speak to the employees that feel their reward package is unfair. By rewarding an employee fairly is contributing to one of the drivers of engagement. The main thing is as long as employees think the reward system that is in place in IBEC is ok and fair, then it is. By following these recommendations for fair rewards IBEC will have employees who are not disgruntled and who feel like they are valued for the work that they do because they are rewarded well.

5.7 Recommendations on improving relationships with management

As the concept of engagement had gained increased currency in recent years, the role of the manager has evolved accordingly. The requirement is for managers to become the central point of contact for employees on their performance, development and reward. As we spoke of in chapter 2 (2.8) and chapter 4 (4.7), employees need to believe that their manager believes in them and that they are setting them up for success and that they care about them as a person and their development. They need to genuinely care about their staff and show it. We stated in chapter 2 (2.8), that there is a link between management and employee engagement, although 42% of our respondents stated that they felt their manager has no interest in them. IBEC need to know that this will affect engagement levels with employees in their jobs. If management do not understand that engagement delivers added value, they have missed a part of their own development. An employee's involvement starts at one-to-

one level with their direct line manager. Managers who do not involve employees in what is happening in the organisation or the department can cause disillusionment and reluctance for employees to go the extra mile. As stated by MacLeod & Brady (2008, p. 202):

“Results of engagement studies in the last few years have shown that a manager’s behaviour, and the work environments they create around them, have a more profound effect than any reward programme on the ownership feelings, engagement levels and behaviours of employees”.

It is the manager who can best inspire enthusiasm for work and empower their people to take the initiative and encourage them when they do. Good managers have the power to create the conditions within people can flourish in their roles. Some Managers in IBEC may need to go on people management skills training courses in order to know how to extract the best from their employees. IBEC need to ensure that management are equipped with coaching, facilitation and motivating skills, as these are the skills that managers need to help create a more involving and supportive environment for employees. IBEC need to have managers who are seen to be mentors and figures who inspire others in the organisation. For any organisation interested in engagement, managers are the vital layer to target because they are the direct contact with employees. IBEC need to ensure that they have managers who attain all the necessary skills to motivate employees. If necessary IBEC should send managers on people management training programmes to equip them with the skills they will need. By following these recommendations relationships between management and employees will flourish.

5.8 Recommendations on improving employee development

From our data it was highlighted to us in chapter 4 (4.5), that 39% of employees in IBEC do not have personal development plans in place. IBEC need to ensure that there are development plans in place for all employees to contribute to engagement. Employees must have opportunities for learning and development. These are rated extremely important for retaining and engaging employees across the workforce and it demonstrates to the employee that the organisation cares about them to develop them. From an employees perspective learning new skills and improving abilities ranks as a driver of engagement. It gives them confidence in performing the job they currently fulfil as well as equipping them for the future, perhaps for even more senior roles. Employees tend to be switched on to the needs of their own careers as well as the needs of the organisation and acknowledging this fact and trying to

cater for it is good in a sense as it will help the organisation to retain and develop a high-quality workforce. Gone are the days of job security and people know that now, so it is sensible for IBEC to have a commitment to their employees that they have remaining and develop their skills and knowledge to allow them to become more employable in case the time comes that they have to let more people go. As previously discussed in chapter 2 (2.7), as stated by Cook (2008, p. 142):

“There needs to be ready access to training and development that meets an individual’s needs”.

If job security cannot be guaranteed moving into the future, development of remaining employees is ever more important. Employees are more likely then to continue to be engaged in their roles if they see that the organisation still has a commitment to them and are doing their best for them in terms of their development. Development underpins employee engagement. What IBEC could do here is to ensure that career plans form part of performance review process with management and that the development plan that is put in place incorporates the employees objectives and the business objectives. So both parties needs are being catered for and the employee is being given the opportunity to develop themselves. As we stated earlier in this chapter in 5.5, managers need to give regular feedback on how an individual is performing in their development and to give good honest, constructive feedback. Good managers are just as important when the learning is occurring because without their guidance and encouragement and help if necessary the learning opportunity will be outweighed if an individual finds the learning and development process quite stressful. By following these recommendations IBEC will have staff who are more committed to them and willing to put the extra effort in as they know IBEC are putting the effort in to them.

5.9 Recommendations to improve work-life balance initiatives

The findings from our survey revealed to us that majority of employees in IBEC cannot avail of work-life balance practices within the organisation. Only a small proportion of employees are allowed to avail of the benefits associated with work-life balance, that figure being represented by 27% of the respondents to our survey. Again practices across IBEC are inconsistent. One rule for one person and another for someone else. IBEC do not seem to recognise the benefits associated with work-life balance and how it can benefit both the employee and the organisation for a number of reasons. By having work-life balance

practices available to all staff aids in the retention of employees, who the company have spent time training in as a valuable members of staff. It also reduces the stresses for individuals trying to balance their personal life along with their working life. It enables them to accommodate both aspects of their life. It is giving flexibility to employees. In return IBEC will see reduced absenteeism levels, improved motivation, increased productivity whilst employees are at work, higher morale amongst staff, increased commitment and loyalty to the organisation and enhanced corporate image. They will be seen as a company that people want to work for. As stated by Anderson (2009, p. 37):

“IBEC themselves carried out a survey in 2007 of their member companies on flexible working arrangements, and the survey revealed that in the eyes of managers, innovation in working time improves whilst they are in work, for those employees who can avail of flexible working arrangements”.

Here IBEC really need to start practicing their own advice that they preach to member companies. They need to lead by example as IBEC are meant to be role models for employers. We also discussed in chapter 2 (2.9), how overall, work-life balance policies and programmes foster good employee relations within companies. By following these recommendations by implementing work-life balance initiatives, IBEC should see a happier more motivated and less stressed workforce who are able to handle their work commitments a lot better. They need to make sure that they open it up to all employees so they believe that they have access to the benefits of it should they need to. They will see that they have a workforce who have both the energy and the inclination to produce high quality work, which in turn benefits the organisation.

5.10 Recommendations to improve communications

IBEC need to realise that communication is critical. Although 39% of respondents stated that they felt communications were open in IBEC, the other 46% of respondents felt like they were just drip fed information and then the other 15% said communications were closed. Employees need to know the big picture in terms of the focus of the business and future direction. Employees will also perform better when they know their views are valued and taken on board. This means a consistent interactive dialogue with all employees. What IBEC need to realise here is that all channels of communication need to be open and transparent. To ensure that all employees are kept fully informed of all matters that are ongoing in the organisation and to be allowed to participate.

In a recent article by Turner (2009, p. 25) he highlighted how Birmingham City Council had undergone a recent serious of change programmes which had not gripped the organisation. Its employees were not motivated and they were disengaged, suffering from a bad case of initiative fatigue. They managed to turn this around to having employees who are high performing and engaged employees. They realised that they can put in new I.T. systems, policies and procedures but if the people working for them are not engaged then it is not going to work and company customers will not see the real difference. They remedied this by involving staff and asking them why they were so unmotivated and the answers that came up again and again emphasised the importance of employees believing in themselves, using their initiative, taking responsibility for getting results and treating others with respect. They held workshops to find out this information. They listened and used open channels of communication and got input from employees when putting new policies and procedures in place. This case shows that employees should be allowed discuss their concerns and to be involved in decision – making where appropriate. The importance of this cannot be over-emphasised. One of the most important things organisations have to realise is not to keep employees in the dark. By keeping employees in the dark can lead to stalled and delayed change programmes because of resistance and half-hearted acceptance, especially in times of change like IBEC is going through at the moment.

If IBEC are to properly engage their employees in the process of change then they need to bring their employees on the change journey and keep them involved and fully informed of the organisations longer term strategies. Openness and honesty go along way and people appreciate it. The Birmingham City case study is a good example for IBEC to pay attention to as Birmingham City were ensuring that they were engaging with their staff and got all their staff involved and allowed them to communicate and get involved in the whole change process. IBEC front line managers are key to ensuring information is communicated / delivered correctly to their staff. Employees will look to their own manager to determine the effect that change will have on them. To bring about lasting change requires a serious engagement by all levels of the organisation and not just a serious of announcements from the top. As we discussed in chapter 2 (2.10), a good communications theory is as stated by Armstrong (2003, p. 816):

“A company that can develop loyalty by keeping people informed and treating them well”.

That means communicating to all and not just a few and by using all the various communication tools available in the company as we mentioned in chapter 2 (2.10), in-house intranet systems, email, staff meetings, personal voice messages, notice boards and annual reports. By following these recommendations and keeping an interactive dialogue with all employees IBEC should see a workforce that performs better.

5.11 Recommendations to improve engagement levels

From our data results chapter 4 (4.10), it showed us that more than half the workforce in IBEC are not fully engaged in their job roles. IBEC needs to ensure that they have an engaged workforce as they need their employees to have the desire to want to always do the best they can in their jobs. They need employees who are willing to go above and beyond in their roles and as we stated in chapter 2 (2.1), “willing to go the extra mile”. Evidence shows that engaging employees in the organisation leads to long-term success for the organisation. They need to ensure that the foundations for employee engagement are implemented correctly such as welcoming a new employee into the company, work design, communication systems, learning and development opportunities, relationships with management, reward and recognition for work done and work-life balance measures. IBEC need to treat employees as adults, engage their talents and watch them grow so that the organisation grows, especially in these hard times that the organisation is going through. IBEC need to see that employees want to be engaged with their work, they want to understand, they want to take pride in the organisation they work for, they want to care and it is the job of IBEC to make sure that nothing stands in the way of that impulse. Engagement is not magic wand, it is a mindset that should run from the top of the organisation to the bottom.

5.12 Implementation

I believe that by implementing these recommendations discussed, IBEC should see a big improvement in their employee engagement practices. If they apply fair process across the organisation to all employees then they should see all employees become fully engaged in their jobs. If they put a time plan in place to implement these recommendations and then review them in six to twelve months, they will be able to see the advantages of having a fully engaged workforce. They need to keep an eye on engagement levels and monitor the progress that it can contribute to the organisation as well as to the employees. If needs be amendments may need to take place along the way to sure that the correct drivers are there in place to ensure engagement. But by implementing correct process like the ones we have

discussed in the recommendations then they should be on the right path. IBEC just need to put their workforce under the same microscope as they do their customers – to understand employees needs, issues and values to ensure employees make the right choices about what tasks they will undertake with what level of focus and invest their time and energies most appropriately to drive the right business outcomes. I personally have learnt a lot from carrying out this research issue and have learnt the best way on how two parties can satisfy their own interests by working together. I am convinced that through an amalgamation of methods that IBEC can raise the current engagement levels in IBEC to improve organisational outcomes.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

- Anderson, Geraldine. (2009) *The Essential Guide to HR Practices in Ireland, HRM Survey and Benchmarking report 2008 – 2009*. 84-86 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Irish Business and Employers Confederation.
- Armstrong, Michael. (2003) *A Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. 9th Edition. 120 Pentonville Road, London N1 9JN, UK. Kogan Page Limited.
- Arthur, Tansey. (2008) *The Essential Guide to Employee Engagement*. 84-86 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2, Ireland. Irish Business and Employers Confederation.
- Babbie, Earl. *Survey Research Methods*. 2nd Edition. Belmont, California 94002. Wadsworth.
- Beardwell, Ian. Holden, Len. & Claydon, Tim. (2004) *Human Resource Management A Contemporary Approach*. 4th Edition. Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, Essex CM20 2JE, England. Pearson Education Limited.
- Cook, Sarah. (2008) *The Essential Guide to Employee Engagement. Better Business Performance Through Staff Satisfaction*. 120 Pentonville Road, London, N1 9JN. United Kingdom. Kogan Page Limited.
- Garavan, Thomas N. Hogan, Carole & Cahir-O'Donnell, Amanda. (2003) *Making Training & Development Work a Best Practice Guide*. 19 Rutland Street, Cork, Ireland. Oak Tree Press.
- McDonald, Lynda A.C. (2005) *Wellness at Work. Protecting and Promoting Employee Wellbeing*. 151 The Broadway, London, SW19 1JQ. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.
- Macleod, David & Brady, Chris. (2008) *The Extra Mile. How to Engage Your People to Win*. Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, CM20 2JE. England. Pearson Education Limited.
- Saunders, Mark. Lewis, Philip & Thornhill, Adrian. (2003) *Research Methods for Business Students*. 3rd Edition. Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, CM20 2JE. England. Pearson Education Limited.
- Small Firms Association, (2002) *A Comprehensive Guide to Human Resource Management*. 84/86 Confederation House, Lower Baggot Street, Dublin 2. Irish Business and Employers Confederation.

JOURNALS

- Alimo-Metcalfe, B. & Bradley, M. (2008) Cast in a new light. *People Management*. 14 (2) January, pp. 38.
- Hayes, Jennifer. (2007) Training and Development Trends. *Running Your Business*. 13 (7) September, pp. 44-46.
- Searle, Peter. (2009) Fully Charged. *People Management*. 15(11) June, pp. 20-24.
- Treacy, Sheila. (2008) Employee Engagement – how to make it work for you. *HR Databank*. 1 (10) October, pp. 4-8.
- Turner, Neil. (2009) The Best Policy. *People Management*. 15 (1) January, pp. 24-27.

WEBSITES

- CIPD in the UK: www.cipd.co.uk
- Irish Business and Employer Website: www.ibec.ie
- Small Firms Association Website: www.sfa.ie
- Towers Perrin: www.towersperrin.com
- Watson Wyatt: www.watsonwyatt.com
- Work Life Balance Website: www.worklifebalance.ie
- World at Work Association: www.worldatwork.org

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

PILOT COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Thursday 25th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe.

If you have any questions regarding this survey please do not hesitate to contact me on ext 1668. Thank you.

Q.1 What is your Gender?

Male Female

Q.2 What is your age group

18 - 25 26 - 35 36 - 45
46 - 55 56 - 65

Q.3 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Assistant Director Director Senior

Q.4 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.5 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job?

Yes No

If you answered No please specify why:

*Induction level, on-the-job training, third level support
Coaching, mentoring.*

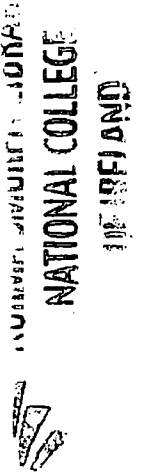
Q.6 Does your job allow you ample opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If you answered No please specify why it does not:

APPENDIX II

COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE ISSUED TO PARTICIPANTS



An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

APPENDIX III

QUESTIONNAIRES COMPLETED BY PARTICIPANTS

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain:

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

overstretched

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers' Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Cannot provide advice while knowing information

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

I have qualifications that could allow me do more, but I'm not allowed.

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Have degrees and don't use them

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Limited and no room for development

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

NATIONAL COLLEGE
OF IRELAND

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

HEAVY WORK LOAD MEANS MOST TASKS ARE DONE AT A RUSHED PACE

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive

Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring

Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Plenty of skills not being used

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

plenty of scope for using initiative +
growing the job

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

I have a lot more skills that I have to use but being at executive support level they put us in a box as to what we are allowed to do.

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

I don't use my degree or masters

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Role is defined without much scope for development

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months

An Employee Engagement Survey

This survey is being undertaken to find out about the current employee engagement levels that employees in the Irish Business and Employers Confederation attain.

This survey is being carried out so employee engagement practices can be improved.

This survey is strictly confidential and will be used for analysis purposes only.

Please complete this questionnaire by close of business on Friday 26th of June 2009.

When completed if you could place this survey into an internal envelope and return to Aisling Igoe. Thank you.

Q.1 What job level do you hold?

Executive Support Officer Executive
Senior Executive Assistant Director Director

Q.2 Do you know what is expected of you in your job?

Yes No

Q.3 Did you receive appropriate training and development to help you do your job when you started?

Yes No

If Yes please tick the appropriate boxes of what training you received:

Induction On the job Mentoring
Coaching In-house systems I.T. training

Q.4 Does your job allow you the opportunity to use your full skills and capabilities?

Yes No

If No please specify why it does not:

Q.5 Does your supervisor review your performance and give you feedback on a one to one basis regularly?

Yes No

If Yes please state how often it is reviewed:

Every 3 months Every 6 months Every 12 months