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Examining Employee Engagement within the Context of a Small Service-Based Firm in Ireland

ANGELA SCHLOER

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ABSTRACT

The need to engage employees within the backdrop of difficult economic conditions prompted this study It examined employee engagement within the context of a small service-based organisation in Dublin The objectives of the study were to identify the current levels of engagement within the organisation, any differences in engagement levels between managers and employees, and recommendations for improvements that would enhance the company's employee engagement levels

The researcher assumed a practitioner-researcher role A mix of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to gather the data required, including an on-line survey and semi-structured interviews that examined some factors related to engagement The overall results showed employee engagement levels varying from slightly engaged to being at the high end of moderate engagement Management reported a slightly higher level of engagement compared to other staff members within the organisation

The recommendations in relation to further enhancing employee engagement levels that emerged from the results of the study include the assessment of the current processes employed in the organisation such as recruitment, job design & enrichment, organisational structure, leadership development, personal development & work life-balance initiatives, training & development initiatives, and communication & consultation initiatives

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Management researchers and HR professionals consider the way in which organisations make full use of their 'human capital' as a means to generate wealth for the business through increased efficiency, quality and innovation (Mullins, 2007) Guest (2000, p 3) proposes that *"the organisation's human capital is a non-substitutable resource, which when tapped, can provide the firm with competitive advantage"* He further asserts that when employees decide to improve the way they work by doing more than the minimum requirement of the job, they contribute to the larger goals of the organisation and, thus, are more 'engaged'

The term Employee engagement has become widely used in the Human Resource field in the last few years It is believed to exist when employees *"employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances"* (Khan, 1990, p 700) Engaged employees are described as being *"prepared to invest significant personal resources, in the form of time and effort, to the successful completion of their task"*, and that *"engagement is at its greatest when an individual is driving personal energies into physical, cognitive and emotional labours"* (Khan, 1990, p 700)

This study was aimed at examining Employee engagement within the context of a single organisation, which will be referred to in this paper as 'The Company' Although the literature on the subject of engagement may display different and sometimes conflicting views regarding its definition, measurement and the factors that influence its occurrence, they agree on its positive outcomes for the organisation Some of its benefits have been enumerated as encompassing increased levels of employee productivity, customer loyalty,

profitability, employee retention and loyalty, among others (The Gallup Organisation, 2004, CIPD, 2006, Levinson, 2007, Demourouti, et al, 2001, BlessingWhite, 2008, Penna, 2006, Watson Wyatt, 2007, McLeod & Brady, 2008, Burud & Tumolo, 2004) Thus, it appears to be good businesses practice for organisations to study Employee Engagement

The Company being studied in this paper is a small service-based organisation located in Dublin with 28 employees, made up of Accounting, Administrative and Legal professionals It is in the business of outsourcing Accounting, Legal and HR & Payroll services to a varied mix of clients These clients range from multinational organisations that rank among the Fortune 500 companies in the world, to smaller organisations with only one employee based in Ireland Although it is part of a larger global group of companies, the Dublin office has been working independently since its inception in 2005

Employee numbers have fallen within 'The Company' in the last few years due to employees leaving for different reasons other than redundancy As a small organisation, it is clear that employee turnover is quite high, at an average of about 25% per annum Furthermore, 'The Company', like many organizations suffered a decrease in Revenue earnings since the deepest point in the economic downturn in 2009 Its clients are also experiencing the same financial pressure, which has raised expectations of service and quality In the outsourcing industry, particularly in the business of providing Legal, Accounting, HR and Payroll administration services, the human element is invaluable due to the sensitivity and complexity of the work involved As a result, competition is becoming fiercer within this sector

'The Company's' experience is not dissimilar to other service-based organisations in Ireland Since Ireland and most of the developed world have recently undergone a deep recession, businesses today are struggling to not only remain profitable but survive in the

current economic climate (Burke & Lyons, 2011) The National Workplace Survey conducted by the National Centre for Partnership and Performance (NCPP) reported that in Ireland, employers' views of the economic climate in the foreseeable future remains bleak They also acknowledged that new strategies and initiatives are still needed to reduce costs and improve service quality and innovation within companies (Roche, Teague & Coughlan, 2011)

According to a recent study by the University College Dublin in collaboration with Queens University in 2011, service-based companies have reported revenue losses and employment losses over the period of the recent recession (Roche, Teague & Coughlan, 2011) Six out of ten firms had to significantly restructure their business The study also implied that there has been a growing realisation by employers that tapping into the knowledge and commitment of their remaining employees is vital for improving productivity and profitability One of the areas that employers have explored in their struggle to do this is related to increasing 'employee engagement'

There are a growing number of surveys being conducted on the level of employee engagement within companies The interest around the subject seems to stem from claims by businesses and research groups of its correlation to employee performance and business performance in general In a recent internal focus group discussion with the management team of 'The Company', employee engagement was identified as one of the areas that needed to be addressed

Employee engagement has been found to be especially vital in sectors that provide professional services to its customers In their struggle to achieve competitive advantage, companies need to ensure that these professionals are consistently engaged with their work, the company, and their clients Organisations can no longer depend on traditional

business practices to gain competitive advantage As a result, they need to tap into their human resources in order to adapt to changing circumstances (Gunnigle, Heraty & Morley, 2002)

The Gallup Organisation published a research study indicating that employee engagement is linked specifically to customer loyalty, profitability, and ultimately, overall business growth (The Gallup Organization, 2004) Similarly, the ISR Research Company has shown multiple examples of companies that have increased their overall financial performance through developing employee engagement strategies within their organisations (ISR, 2005)

Researchers believe that employee engagement is more important today because the evolution in technology has made manual labour less of a necessity and employees are employed due to their technical and professional skills There is has been a growing realisation in employers and managers alike regarding the importance of finding ways in which to encourage employees to choose behaviours that improve efficiency and productivity at work According to Markos and Srivdevi (2010, p p 89-96), employers now realize that by focusing on employee engagement, they can create a more efficient and productive workforce They further state that "any initiatives for improvement which are taken by management cannot be fruitful without wilful involvement and engagement of employees"

Considering its established significance for businesses, this study is aimed at examining the employee engagement levels within 'The Company' to determine recommendations for increasing its occurrence among employees Thus, the following questions are being addressed

Research Questions

- What is the level of employee engagement within "The Company"?

- Is there a difference in the level of employee engagement between employees and management within 'The Company'?

- What recommendations for improvement can be made in order to increase the current levels of employee engagement within the 'The Company'?

In light of the above, the author adopted a practitioner-researcher role Being an employee of 'The Company', the researcher had access to the information needed to answer the research questions posed in this study In addition, the researcher's role within the organisation would allow for the results of the study to be used by "The Company" to further develop its Human Resource strategies and processes Therefore, internal consultancy through an Action Research approach was taken

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

According to management and HR professionals, it is the way in which organisations make full use of their 'human capital' that will enable them to generate wealth through increased efficiency, quality and innovation (Mullins, 2007) The opportunities brought about by 21st century innovation and globalisation are not only open to companies but to individual employees as well, making it highly important for companies to engage not only with their customers, but also their employees in order to make full use of their 'human capital'

Guest (2000, p 3), an expert in the field of HR studies, contends that *"the organisation's human capital is a non-substitutable resource, which when tapped, can provide the firm with competitive advantage"* He further asserts that when employees decide to improve the way they work by doing more than the minimum requirement of the job, they contribute to the larger goals of the organisation and thus are more 'engaged'

The study into employee engagement (EE) has spanned multiple disciplines Consultancy firms, corporations, and academic researchers are only some of those who have attempted to learn more about EE, its meaning, and the consequences of its presence or absence within the workplace In order to understand the concept, the next section will examine literature regarding the history and evolution of employee engagement, its definition, dimensions, consequences to the business, and factors that are influential in engaging employees

2 1 History and Evolution of Employee Engagement

Businesses have been looking into ways of managing employees for centuries (Mullins, 2997) The way in which businesses treat and manage their employees have evolved according to changes in the perception of the value and contribution of employees to the business In the beginning of the 20th century, scientific management (Taylor, 1911) came into the scene as an answer to fostering an efficient workforce During this time, employees were seen as a 'cog in a wheel' and were treated like machines Scientific management based its style on the idea that strict work standards and close supervision were essential to meet minimum standards and expectations (Risher, 2003)

However, as the nature of work and business started to change, the perception of the worth and value of an employee in the workplace evolved as well Technological advances meant that machines took over most of the manual tasks in the workplace and left the business with roles that required the employees that filled them to have more advance technical and professional skills According to HR practitioners like Armstrong (2009), competitive advantage in today's environment can only be attained by maximising employees' skills, talent, reputation, as well as their networks He further asserts that it is the inimitability and non-substitutability of today's skilled professionals that lead to the success of organisations

In the last quarter of the 20th century, the concept of "the employee" changed from being merely a worker to being "personnel" and finally to what is now described as the "human resource" With this, revolutionary management styles came into the picture Theories such as the Resource Based View of HR came into being that describe the company's human capital as being just as important as other capital assets such as land,

machinery and others (Armstrong, 2009) As a result of the change in perspective, the focus of management researchers started to shift accordingly Studies now looked into concepts that would foster and improve the employee's ability and commitment In the '80s job satisfaction became a topic of interest precluded by the Hawthorne Studies (Mayo, 1945) In the 1990s, research focused on the concept of 'employee motivation' (Buhler, 1998, Capozzoli, 1998)

Other concepts such as commitment, and Organizational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB) (Organ, 1988, Bateman and Organ, 1983, Smith, Organ and Near, 1983) also started to appear It is from these concepts that the notion of employee engagement started to take shape Although the concept is not attributed to any one specific author, the first definition of the term as it is currently used and understood is credited to Khan (1990)

2 2 Definition of Employee Engagement

As the concept of EE started to gain popularity, different practitioner groups and research consultancies started studying the concept and began to create their own definitions of the term It is disturbing that the first thing that is apparent in the literature concerning EE is the fact that after being in the lime light for a number of years, there is still no single generally accepted definition for the term (Macey& Schneider, 2008a) This poses a problem when studying the concept since a lack of a common definition may result in variations in what is being measured, which may further result in "*contradictory or non-replicable studies*" (Rotter, 1990, p 490)

An example of a definition of EE available from practitioner groups is from Perrin's Global Workforce Study (2003), who have created their own definition of EE as being the 'employees' willingness and ability to help their company succeed, largely by providing

discretionary effort on a sustainable basis' Their study suggests that factors such as emotional feelings and rational thoughts about their work and work place affect the level of employee engagement

Similarly, the high-profile Gallup organization has likened employee engagement to an employee's positive attachment and commitment to the organization and their work (Dernovsek, 2008) They describe EE as the employee's 'involvement with and enthusiasm for work' It has also been defined by Robinson, Perryman &Hayday (2004, p 20) as *"a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its value An engaged employee is aware of the business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization"* They further contend that in order for organizations to nurture engagement, they must acknowledge the two-way relationship between the employee and employer, developing engagement is not a one way process

As evidenced from the above examples, many definitions of EE are practitioner-based rather than based on academic or empirical research It is because of this that some researchers such as Robinson et al (2004) have stated that the concept of EE may, at first, seem like a 'faddish' premise rather than a legitimate construct The main issue with these definitions is that they merely describe the outcomes of engagement rather than defining its psychological state (Robertson-Smith & Markwick, 2009)

Although scarce, academic research does exist on the subject and has based its definition on Kahn's (1990, p 700)) early description of EE He describes it as *"the harnessing of organisational members" selves to their work roles, in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role performances"* To further clarify the concept, Khan also described the concept of

disengagement, which he refers to as "*the uncoupling of selves from work roles, in disengagement, people withdraw and defend themselves physically, cognitively, or emotionally during role performances*" Thus, Kahn's (1990, 1992) definition points to engagement as being in a state of psychological presence when occupying and performing an organizational role

Khan's quantitative study explored workplace conditions that related to whether employees engage or disengage from their organisations He describes engaged employees as being "*prepared to invest significant personal resources, in the form of time and effort, to the successful completion of their task, and that engagement is at its greatest when an individual is driving personal energies into physical, cognitive and emotional labours*" (Khan, 1990, p 700)

Khan's definition has been supported by academic researchers such as Rothbard (2001) and Maslach, Schaufeli and Leiter (2001) The former developed Khan's definition by stating that engagement reflects a state of being absorbed and intensely focused in one's work Maslach, et al (2001, p 417) also further explain work engagement as being a psychological state They refer to engaged employees as being in a "*persistent, positive affective-motivational state of fulfilment*" Attridge (2009, p 384) has described the definition of Nelson & Simmons (2003) as a more complete definition of engagement They describe a state of employee engagement as "*when employees feel positive emotions toward their work, find their work to be personally meaningful, consider their workload manageable, and have hope about the future of their work*"

2 3 Employee Engagement and Other Constructs

Some definitions of engagement create a problem for studying EE, mainly because they liken the concept to other existing constructs that are available in literature such as job involvement, commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour Therefore, practitioners have looked to psychological literature for a deeper understanding of the term Although EE has been described as operationalizing many different constructs, academic literature does provide some clarity to the concept by describing engagement as being distinct from other constructs in organizational behaviour (Robinson et al, 2004)

In the search for providing clarity to EE's meaning, academic researchers have attempted to study EE as an independent construct, taking their lead from Khan's earlier work For example, May, Gilson & Harter (2004) have distinguished engagement from job involvement, stating that job involvement is linked to one's self image and it is a result of an individual's 'cognitive judgment' regarding how the job satisfies certain needs of the individual This is distinct from engagement, which has to do with *"how individuals employ themselves in the performance of their job"* They state that engagement *"involves the active use of emotions and behaviours in addition to cognitions"* (May et al , 2004, p 3) However, they do suggest that EE may be a precursor to job involvement

Furthermore, Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, (2002, p 6), have described the construct of EE as *"a measure of the combination of an individual's involvement and satisfaction with as well as enthusiasm for work"* since a person who is fully engaged in his job may also feel more involved and is able to identify with their job It has also been used interchangeably with commitment (MacCashland, 1999) However, Armstrong (2009, p 336) attempts to clarify the distinction between employee engagement and commitment According to his definition, the main distinction is that EE is essentially job-oriented

whereas commitment is organisationally-oriented He does contend, however, that these concepts are very closely related and that in most cases, they may be strongly correlated He therefore describes the state of being engaged as 'feeling excitement for their jobs and 'going the extra mile'

Another concept that is confused with EE is that of job satisfaction Fernandez (2007) distinguished the two and bluntly stated that employee satisfaction is not the same as employee engagement Other researchers support Fernandez's contention by stating that EE goes beyond simple satisfaction, it involves passion and commitment as well as "*the willingness to invest oneself and expand one's discretionary effort to help the employer succeed*" Markos & Sridevi, 2010, p 90)

To further clarify the confusion between the different concepts and EE, a report by Attridge (2009) suggests that multiple elements create the concept of EE and these include 'employee involvement, commitment, enthusiasm and passion for work' Recent researches have also noted that constructs such as commitment, OCB and satisfaction, when studied individually, cannot replace the overriding concept of EE However, they may be important predictors and facets of EE (Macey and Schneider, 2008, Robinson et al, 2004) Halbesleben (2003), a burnout researcher, has described EE as being the antithesis of stress within its continuum Thus, being the opposite of burnout

Saks (2006, p 602) summarized the definition of engagement nicely by saying that "*although the definition and meaning of engagement in the practitioner literature often overlaps with other constructs, in the academic literature it has been defined as a distinct and unique construct that consists of cognitive, emotional, and behavioural components that are associated with individual role performance*"

2 4 Dimensions of Employee Engagement

As stated earlier, Khan (1990) described EE as having cognitive, emotional and physical dimensions May and Harter (2004, p 12) describes Khan as having further clarified that "*in engagement, people employ and express themselves, cognitively, emotionally and physically during role performances*" Cook (2008, p 3) has been able to explain this further by describing EE as "*how positively an employee thinks about the organization, feels about the organization and is proactive in relation to achieving organizational goals for customers, colleagues and other stakeholders*"

These three dimensions of EE have also been claimed by ISR (2005) They argue that although research organisations look at only one or two dimensions of EE, it is almost certain that three dimensions exist, namely emotional, physical and cognitive dimensions The emotional dimension looks at how employees feel about their work, the company, its leadership and environment The Physical dimension is also known as the behavioural dimension or how employees act or intend to act in the future, whether they will stay with the company or extend extra effort in performing their role And finally, the cognitive dimension is the employee's belief in and support of the goals and values of the organisation and its leadership If the employee is engaged within all three dimensions, he displays an increased level of discretionary effort, which Purcell (2003) is said to have described as "*the choices that people at work often have in the way they do their job and the amount of effort, innovation and productive behaviour they display*" (Armstrong, 2009, p 171)

The three dimensions or components of EE have contributed to the studies on the subject that were done in order to create measurement tools for engagement (Attridge,

2009) Examples of the academic tools created are the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale and May, Gilson and Harter's Scale for Engagement Both measure work engagement representing behavioural, emotional and cognitive dimensions (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006) Some of the leading business consultancy firms have also used these dimensions to build engagement measurement tools such as Gallup, BlessingWhite, Hewitt, Sirota, Towers Perrin, Valtera and Watson Wyatt Worldwide (Attridge, 2009)

2 5 Factors that Influence Employee Engagement

Discerning the factors that enable or restrict employee engagement is important when studying the concept from a Human Resource Perspective The importance of setting drivers for the concept of engagement is explained by the Social Exchange Theory (SET) This theory states that *"obligations are generated through a series of interactions between parties who are in a state of reciprocal interdependence A basic tenet of SET is that relationships evolve over time into trusting, loyal, and mutual commitments as long as the parties abide by certain "rules" of exchange"* (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005 cited in Kular, Gatenby, Rees, Soane, & Truss, 2008, p 5)

The theory states that there are certain reciprocity rules that individuals abide by Thus, if an employee receives certain socio-emotional or financial resources from their organization, it is natural for them to reciprocate this act in a balanced manner This corresponds with the statement of Robinson et al (2004) in the previous section stating that engagement is a two-way process whereby when individuals are offered fairness and trust by the organization, they respond by engaging themselves in their work According to Saks (2006, p 603), employees compensate *"for resources and benefits provided by their organization"* He contends that SET can be used as a "theoretical foundation" to enable us

to clarify the employee's choice of being engaged in their work and organization He states that *"the amount of cognitive, emotional, and physical resources that an individual is prepared to devote in the performance of one's work roles is contingent on the economic and socio-emotional resources received from the organization"*

When one looks at the different studies that have been done on the subject of drivers of engagement, there is no single list of drivers for EE available According to Robinson (2007), it is unlikely that a one-size-fits-all list of engagement drivers can be achieved since it can be influenced by so many interrelated factors that vary according to the organisation, the employee group the individual employee as well as the job itself However, there does seem to be some themes that recur within the literature

Although there are very few empirical studies on the subject, the initial work by Khan (1990) did create a good foundation on the possible factors that could influence employee engagement He found three psychological conditions that can be associated with engagement at one's work He identified these as being meaningfulness, safety and availability The study found that if psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability are present in the work situation, employees tend to be more engaged

Khan's model was tested by May et al (2004, pp 15-16), the only study to empirically test his findings, which found a significant relationship between engagement being influenced by the three concepts of meaningfulness, safety, and availability They also related these three concepts to certain conditions at work that relate to the employee's perceptions of themselves, the work itself and the working environment

2 5 1 The Individual

According to academic researchers, EE is a construct that is strongly associated with the individual's perceived abilities and environment Engagement is said to have positive associations with self-reports of perceived well-being and social relations at the individual level (Attridge, 2009) Studies by Schaufeli, Taris&Rhenen, (2008) found negative associations between engagement levels and self-ratings of alcoholism and job burnout Robinson et al (2004) reported that personal and job characteristics were associated with differences in engagement levels This study was conducted in the UK with over 10,000 participants The same study found that employees who occupy executive and management roles tend to have higher engagement levels than those employees who are in supporting roles Furthermore, individuals who were highly educated tended to be more committed to their professions and tended to show higher levels of engagement than their less skilled or less educated counterparts

When studying the concept of psychological availability in employees as part of engagement, Khan (1990) and subsequently May et al (2004), found that the individual's perception of the availability of his own physical, emotional and cognitive resources in order to engage at work were factors that related to engagement levels

2 5 2 The Work Itself

The first concept that Khan (1990) and May et al (2004) found to have a significant relationship to employee engagement is that of "meaningfulness" They defined this factor as "*the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideals or standards*" (May et al, 2004, p 14) They found that certain conditions related to the job itself, such as job enrichment, work role fit or alignment were positive predictors of

psychological meaningfulness, which in turn, was positively related to employee engagement According to Armstrong (2009), interesting and challenging work, responsibility as well as control over resources all influence engagement If the work itself is meaningless to the employee, he or she will be detached and apathetic about the work (Thomas &Velthouse, 1990)

Another academic study into the drivers of engagement is that of Maslach, Schaufelli, &Leiter (2001), which focused on areas of work-life that either led to burnout or engagement They identified meaningful and valued work as well as workload and a sense of control of their work as significantly affecting the state of employees' engagement

These findings have been supported by the Towers Perrin Talent Report (2003), when they studied more than 35,000 employees in U S companies One of the top three drivers identified were challenging work, and decision making authority in the job

2 5 3 The Working Environment

Psychological safety, which is described as "*a feeling of being able to show oneself without fear of negative consequences to one's self image, status, or career*" is said to be positively related to the norms that are being employed within the individual's environment It is also influenced by the employee's relationship with his immediate superior and colleagues Furthermore, psychological availability, which is described as "*the belief that all the resources to engage oneself at work are available*", is said to be weighted on the "*provision of enough resources for the employee to do his/her work, work/role security and other external factors*" (Khan, 1990 p)

Glen (2006) suggests that the employee's working environment may predict engagement Further literature also submits that the individual's working environment is affected by certain factors such as his relationship with management, relationship with colleagues/co-workers and the overall organisational context in which he is a part of (Attridge, 2009)

2 5 4 Relationship With Management

In Maslach, et al's(2001) study, they also concluded that aside from meaningful and valued work, and a sustainable workload, engagement in one's job is linked to factors that are influenced by the individual's relationship with management that lead to feelings of choice and control, appropriate recognition and reward, as well as a sense of fairness and justice A study by Simon (2011) on the essentials of EE in organisations also outlined characteristics of good quality line management, employing two-way communication, a development focus, and commitment to employee wellbeing as some of the top drivers of engagement

The Towers Perrin Talent Report (2003) identified other factors relating to management's role in engagement such as management's interest in employees' well-being, and the decision making authority given by management to employees Furthermore, the Institute of Employment embarked in a survey of 10,000 British employees in the NHS and suggested that the drivers of EE were found to be *"a sense of feeling valued and involved"*, *"the extent to which employees feel able to voice their ideas"*, *"the opportunities employees have to develop their jobs"*, and *"the extent to which the organization is concerned for employees' health and well-being"* (Robinson et al, 2004, p 15)

Similar findings by the CIPD (2006) also suggest that communication, particularly from management, is a top driver in leading employee engagement in the workplace They specified that it is the opportunity to feed employee views and opinions upward that is the most important driver of employee engagement This was followed by the "feeling of being well informed about what is happening in the organization", and "thinking that their manager is committed to the organization"

The Gallup organization found that managers are keys to maintaining an engaged workforce The Development Dimensions International (DDI, 2005) have come up with five areas that need to be addressed by managers if they are to keep their work force engaged These include 'aligning efforts with strategy, actively empowering, promoting and encouraging teamwork and collaboration, helping people grow and develop, and providing support and recognition where appropriate'

2 5 5 Co-Worker Relationships

As mentioned earlier, in order for employees to feel a sense of psychological safety, they must be able to express themselves at work without any fear of negative consequences on their self-image, status, or career (Khan, 1990) This feeling is impacted on by the employee's relationship not just with their manager but their co-workers as well

Studies have shown that a supportive working community is a factor of an employee's work-life that affects engagement (Maslach et al, 2001) Simon (2001) had similar findings, where effective internal co-operation within companies was found to be essential to employee engagement Similarly, Towers Perrin (2003) also identified 'a collaborative work environment where people work well in teams' to be a driver for

engagement According to Lockwood (2007) and Glen (2006) workplace culture sets the tone for engagement

2 5 6 Organisational Factors

Aside from the factors related to the work itself and the working environment, as perceived by the employee, other factors have been identified as having an influence on employee engagement The study by Simon (2011) looked at accessible HR policies and practices, to which managers at all levels are committed as a building blocks of EE The other characteristics of a high EE work place as identified by the Towers Perrin Talent Report in 2003were evidence that the company is focused on customers, career advancement opportunities, the company's reputation as a good employer, and a clear vision from senior management about future success (Towers Perrin Talent Report, 2003)

Robertson-Smith & Marwick (009) cited studies by Lockwood (2007) and Peacock (2008) that found flexible working initiatives and other work-life balance initiatives by the organisation as important levers for engagement and have an impact on staff retention This was explained as being a phenomenon that is common with the new generation of workers who value training, career opportunities and work-life balance as well as empowerment as important in their engagement at work

What is interesting about most of the research results that focus on EE is the fact that most drivers that have been found to encourage employee engagement are non-financial in nature Buckingham and Coffman (2005) suggest that rewards in the form of pay and benefits important However, a fair financial package is to only be the first step that companies can take to keep their workforce In order to bring their human capital to the next level and make full use of their potential, a commitment to development and

engagement must be visible They used the analogy that financial packages are *"like tickets to the ballpark, -they can get the company into the game, but can't help it win"* Markos & Sridevi, 2010, p 91)

2 6 Consequences of an Engaged Workforce

Although it is apparent that there is still some confusion as to the details regarding the definition and measurement of employee engagement, practitioner and academic literature do agree about its outcomes and consequence (Maslach, et al, 2001) Schaufeli et al (2002) describe work engagement as a 'positive experience in itself' The commonality seems that to be present in all the definitions and studies on employee engagement is that it is "a desirable condition" that has a purpose for the organisation (Macey and Schneider, 2008a)

Although countless consequences of engagement have been cited in different business-based and academic literature, some examples are cited below

2 6 1 Customer Loyalty

Many consultancy firms and businesses have studied the impact EE is said to have on organisations These studies site benefits in terms of overall company performance and profit as consequences of high EE levels The Gallup Organisation (2004) linked EE with business growth, profitability and customer loyalty According to their study on retail businesses, those stores that are on the top 25% of the EE scale significantly outperformed those that were in the bottom 25% This was measured through productivity measures such as sales, turnover and complaints received by customers Levinson (2007) explains that engaged employees are more likely to create loyal customers This is supported by Pont's

(2004) finding that organisations with high levels of employee engagement have a higher customer loyalty result

2 6 2 Employee Retention& Loyalty

The CIPD engagement report also noted that engaged employees are less likely to leave their employer than disengaged employees, reducing recruitment-related and training costs in the long term Aside from this, the CIPD results have described engaged employees as *"more likely to act as organisational advocates than disengaged employees and therefore may have a powerful role to play in promoting their organisation as an employer of choice"* (CIPD, 2006)

Levinson (2007) found that employees who are engaged are more likely to stay with the organisation This is further supported by Demourouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, Schaufeli (2001), that employee work engagement is positively linked to organisational commitment In a report by BlessingWhite (2008), they found that among the 3,342 employees surveyed in North America from across different industries and sectors, 85% of engaged employees intended to stay within the company they were in while only 27% of disengaged employees intended to stay with their current employer

Moreover, the Scottish Executive Social Research (2007, p 23) stated that *"engaged employees are more likely to advocate the organisation as a place to work and actively promote its products and services"* In contrast, disengaged employees may discourage parties from joining the company they work for (Penna, 2006)

2 6 3 Employee Productivity

Multiple surveys and reports on employee engagement point out that engaged employees are more productive than their disengaged counterparts Lockwood (2007, p 3) stressed that *"engaged employees work harder, are more loyal and more likely to go the extra mile for the corporation"* A study by the Corporate Leadership Council found that the most engaged employees of the 50,000 that were surveyed, performed 20% better than their colleagues The study by Watson Wyatt (2007) also confirmed that the companies' top performers in their cross-national study were two times more likely to be top performers than the rest of the employees in the company

2 6 4 Profitability

Possibly the most important consequence studied in relation to the organisational impact of employee engagement is that of the bottom-line and profitability The ISR research firm has scrutinized the correlation between EE and corporate financial performance where they found that financial performance of companies with high engagement levels were significantly more superior that those with low EE levels (ISR, 2005) This is said to be due to the findings that employees who are engaged are more productive with higher levels of output in their jobs (Mcleod& Brady, 2008)

Burud and Tumolo (2004) concluded, after studying 21 different organisations, that 'the use of human capital practices that emphasize engagement and various measures had positive relationships with the overall financial success of a company' Prior to this, Watson Wyatt (2002) came up with similar findings They concluded that human capital index scores correlated with future financial performance when companies in the US, Canada and the UK where assessed within a two-year period They stated that 'elements of

engagement were better predictors of financial performance in those companies that their own past financial performance' (Watson Wyatt, 2005)

The financial impact of having engaged employees can be attributed to certain characteristics of engaged employees According to the results of the CIPD Engagement Survey in 2006, engaged employees take less sick leave than disengaged employees This means they spend more time at work than disengaged employees

It becomes apparent in the review of related literature that, although there are mountains of research studies by practitioners and organisations dealing with employee engagement, there seem to be no clear guidelines as to the tools and approaches necessary to assess the drivers of engagement within a particular organisation However, the above studies show that the overarching view of employee engagement is that it is an area that is worth looking into, especially for companies that wish to improve the use of their human capital

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

As evidenced in the review of the literature in the previous section, over the years, the concept of employee engagement has become more widely studied due to claims by research organisations and businesses of its correlation with greater productivity, resulting in organisational success and growth As mentioned by Guest (2000) and others, organisations that strive for competitive advantage want to ensure that they make full use of their human resources in order to fulfil their corporate goals and objectives In order for employees to engage in their work, certain organisational and management initiatives need to be in place (Mullins, 2007) Moreover, it is a popular view among business researchers that management need to seek to encourage engagement and, indeed, be engaged themselves [(Robinson (2007), Attridge (2009), Armstrong (2009), Thomas & Velthouse, 1990, the Towers Perrin Talent Report (2003), Glen (2006), Simon (2011), the CIPD (2006), Robertson-Smith & Marwick (2009)]

With this in mind, this particular study focused on examining engagement within a single organisation, 'The Company' It is a service-based outsourcing organisation with offices in Dublin 'The Company' has experienced a slim growth rate in the last year as an effect of the global economic downturn with revenue growth at only 1% in 2011 compared to its expected growth of 5% Although it is part of a global group of companies, the Dublin office has operated independently since its inception in 2005 It currently employs 28 employees who are Legal, Administrative and Accounting professionals

'The Company' is headed by the Managing Director There are three main departments, comprising of the Legal & Compliance, Accounting and Administration

Departments, with their own Heads of Department, who operationally report to the General Manager The Legal & Compliance Department comprises 9 professionals who have either a purely Legal or Company Secretarial background The Accounting department comprises of 14 Accountants, who range from Trainee level to Senior/Manager level The Administration department has 3 members, who are a mix of HR and general Administration professionals (refer to Appendix A for the Organisational Chart) Due to the nature of its business and the size of the organisation, all employees across the company have direct contact with clients and other service providers on a daily basis

Over the recent years, employee numbers have fallen from 32, at its highest level, in 2008, to a low of 26 in early 2012 The fall in head count was due to employee turnover for reasons such as 'finding a new job elsewhere', 'unhappy with current role', 'health issues' and 'moving back to their home country' Since then, only a few number of roles have been re-filled, while others have been left without a replacement due to declining client numbers As a result, the current employees that have stayed are now expected to be more productive than in past years

Aside from a high level of employee turnover, a recent focus-group discussion with the management team has pointed out that the current engagement level of employees needs to be assessed in order to gain insight into ways of increasing overall productivity within all the departments As the company is in the business of providing professional and administrative services to clients, their skills, knowledge and level of engagement is of utmost importance in retaining client commitment to the organisation 'The Company's' clients' expectations of service and quality are increasing as competition becomes fiercer within the general market, evidenced by their feedback and the increasingly complex queries they expect to be answered by their service-providers Therefore, there is a

growing need for 'The Company', which depends on its professional employees, to deliver these professional services to its clients Thus, it is actively seeking out ways in which to increase employee productivity and engagement With this in mind, the research objectives of this study are to

- identify the current level of employee engagement within "The Company",

- identify any differences in engagement levels between Managers and Employees,

- identify recommendations for improvement in order to increase the current levels of employee engagement within the 'The Company'

This research study is aimed at addressing the following research questions

Research Questions

- What is the level of employee engagement within "The Company"?

- Is there a difference in the level of employee engagement between employees and management within 'The Company'?

- What recommendations for improvement can be made in order to increase the current levels of employee engagement within the 'The Company'?

The next section outlines the research methods and approaches used in this study to answer the research questions posed in the previous section

3 1 Research Approach

The approach that the researcher took in conducting this piece of research was a pragmatic one This allowed the researcher to focus on the practical application of the findings, which were based on integrating different perspectives in the interpretation of the data gathered Action research was employed as it allowed for the resolution of organisational issues through internal consultancy In particular, following the action research method enabled the researcher to diagnose the current nature and state of employee engagement within 'The Company' Conclusions and recommendations could then be determined and used as the basis for making decisions aimed at effecting positive change within the organisation

In order for a piece of research to be of good quality, the data gathered and presented needs to be deemed as reliable and valid Saunders et al (2009) defines reliability as 'the extent to which data collection techniques will yield consistent findings or that there is transparency in how sense was made from the raw data' It was the researcher's contention that the collection of primary data was necessary in order to answer the research questions posed It was also determined that a singular method in collecting primary data would not suffice in addressing each research question In line with the pragmatic approach taken in this study and to ensure that the data collected would be reliable, the process of triangulation was applied, where *"a combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon"* were employed (Denzin,1978, p 291) This allowed the researcher to use a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods to provide depth and breadth to the results of the study

In support of this approach, Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, (2009, p 154) state that *"since all different techniques and procedures will have different effects it makes sense to*

use different methods to cancel out the 'method effect' That will lead to greater confidence being placed in the research findings" The choice of a mixed method of triangulation also allowed the researcher to gain increased accuracy and validly in its findings, which is valuable not only to the researcher but also the organisation being studied, which may implement the recommendations arising from this research study (Jick, 1978)

A quantitative research method was employed in the form of a survey questionnaire that provided valuable statistical data to address the research questions This method was used to answer the first research question in relation to the level of employee engagement within 'The Company' An existing survey questionnaire was chosen that was designed to assess employee engagement The details of the questionnaire are discussed in the *Section 3 2 1* of this chapter

The data gathered using the survey method also provided information in relation to the second research question regarding the difference of employee engagement levels between management and staff in 'The Company' This was possible since the statistical findings from the data gathered through the survey would indicate whether a difference in results occurred between respondents who belonged to management and non-management departments

The succeeding methods used were of a qualitative nature First, three open-ended questions were added to the survey questionnaire mentioned above that were aimed at acquiring additional and valuable information in relation to the respondents' opinions and views regarding a) their working environment and b) the job itself, and c) answering the third research question in relation to recommendations for improvement in the area of employee engagement within 'The Company'

Second, semi-structured interviews were conducted with members of management and staff that were aimed at further exploring the trends that were apparent in the results of the survey questionnaire, including the answers given to the open-ended questions of the survey This was envisaged as a means to provide depth in relation to possible explanations as to the trends that came about from the survey results as well as the recommendations that would be provided at the end of the research study

The author also chose to adopt a practitioner-researcher role in conducting this study Being an employee of 'The Company' being studied, the researcher had access to the information needed to answer the research questions posed in this study In addition, the researcher's role within the organisation would allow for the results of this study to be used by the organisation to further develop current Human Resource strategies and processes, which was in line with the Action Research approach taken in the study

It is highly essential to note, however, that the role of the researcher within the organisation also brings about certain limitations in terms of the conduct of this study As a practitioner-researcher, it was essential to be aware of one's own biases and opinions about the subject matter being studied in order to avoid 'imposing one's own frame of reference and biases in the research process' (Saunders et al, 2009) Since the research results can only be reliable if the data provided is empirical in nature, the researcher had to be aware of certain preconceptions while conducting the research in order to avoid contamination of the results and the risk of unreliable results The addition of the semi-structured interviews to explain certain trends in the results of the survey was found to be very useful in this regard It provided a platform for the researcher to gather the participants' opinions and views regarding the trends that were found in the survey This method allowed the

researcher to test one's own beliefs rather than simply providing these explanations from the researcher's own perspective alone

3 2 Survey Design

In order to maintain validity of the research data gathered, the questionnaire chosen needed to focus on answering the research questions that were posed in this study Validity is defined as 'the extent to which data collection techniques accurately measure what they were intended to measure' (Saunders et al, 2009) Thus, the researcher chose to use an existing survey questionnaire as the basis for assessing the current level of employee engagement within 'The Company'

The survey questionnaire used in the study was based on May, Gilson and Harter's (2004) Scale for Engagement (Appendix B), which is one of the few academic questionnaires available on engagement today (Attridge, 2009) The original questionnaire was designed to measure engagement based on the participants' perceptions about themselves, their jobs, their supervisors/ managers and their co-workers

As this research study was conducted in the context of a small organisation as compared to the original study by May et al (2004), the modified version of questionnaire used had fewer items than the original questionnaire, comprising of 41 questions in total However, the researcher maintained at least 2 items for every area being assessed in the questionnaire, including 'test' questions to check the reliability of the answers provided by each respondent The items used were carefully chosen so that each area being studied in the original questionnaire was adequately tested

3 2 1 Survey Questionnaire

The survey questionnaire measured the following

3 2 1 1 Level of Engagement

An overall scale was used to measure the level of employee engagement using 7 items representing the three components of engagement, namely, **cognitive, emotional** and **physical engagement**

3 2 1 2 Factors that Relate to Engagement

The survey also included items from May et al's (2004) original scale that looked at certain factors about the individual, the work itself and the work environment that they found to be related to employee engagement Given the approach used, which is Action Research, the nature of this study involves internal consulting Therefore, including these factors in the survey was deemed significant since they would allow for depth and breadth of data relating to engagement Furthermore, the data gathered would be valuable in determining the conclusions and recommendations arising from this study, which were envisaged to become the basis for making decisions aimed at effecting positive change within the organisation

a Psychological Meaningfulness

3 items from the scale measured 'the degree of meaning that individuals discovered in their work-related activities' (May et al, 2004, p 21) or *"the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideas or standards"* (May et al, 2004) The questions around psychological meaningfulness looked at the individual's perception of the importance of his work, the personal meaning of the job activities to the individual

and his perception of the value of his work This was an important variable in the study as this psychological construct has been described by Khan (1990) and May et al (2004) as an antecedent to job engagement

b Psychological Safety

Psychological safety or *"the feeling of being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career"* (Khan, 1990, p 708) was measured using 2 items that assessed how safe the individual felt within their working environment, whether they felt the work environment was threatening or whether they felt comfortable to express their opinions and be themselves at work

c Psychological Availability

Three items in the scale measured the individual's perception of the availability of his own physical, emotional and cognitive resources in order to engage at work *"In essence, it assesses the readiness, or confidence, of a person to engage in his/her work role given that individuals engage in many other life activities"* (May et al, 2004, p 17-18) The questions surrounding this section looked at the individual's perceived level of confidence to handle the demands of his work, his ability to deal with problems arising at work and his confidence in displaying the appropriate emotions at work

d Self-Consciousness

Self-consciousness or an individual's preoccupation about how others perceive or judge them (May et al, 2004) at work was measured using 2 items that looked at whether the individual worried about how others perceived them at work

e Work-Role Fit

Work-Role fit was measured using 2 items that looked at the individual's perception of the 'fit' between their self-concept and their jobs This information was deemed important since it is believed that work roles that are aligned with the individual's self-concepts provide more meaningful work experiences and lead to higher engagement (May et al, 2004)

f Resources

The 3 items looking at resources focused on the individual's perception of whether they possess the necessary resources such to meet the physical, emotional and cognitive demands of work

g Co-Worker Relations

This section had 4 items that looked at the individual's perception of their relationship with their co-workers and whether this relationship was deemed to be rewarding The items asked whether the employee felt they were listened to, whether they respected each other at work and whether they trusted their co-workers

h Co-Worker Norm Adherence

Co-worker norm adherence was measured using 2 items that looked at whether the employee felt that they followed what is expected from them by their co-workers

ı Supervisor/Management Relations

Eight items in the scale looked at the employee's perceived relationship with their manager The questions asked whether the individual perceived their manager to be helpful in solving work-related problems, whether they encouraged the development of new skills, and whether they were interested in how the employees think and feel about things at work It also looked at whether the employees perceived that they were being treated fairly by their managers, whether they felt they were given enough autonomy at work and whether they trusted their managers

3 2 2 Open-Ended Questions

The researcher also included three self-formulated questions at the end of the survey questionnaire These were designed to capture the opinions and views of the respondents and allow them to elaborate on these views using their own words These questions were valuable for the researcher in exploring further aspects of employee engagement that may not have been found if the responses were limited to closed-ended questions

3 2 3 Scales

The survey questionnaire utilised a Likert-Style Rating Scale, which allowed the respondents to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with the statements in the questionnaire Instead of the 5-point scale used in the original survey by May et al (2004), the researcher chose to use a 4-point scale instead The respondents could choose from answers ranging from *1- Strongly Disagree* to *4- Strongly Agree* There is some evidence that, particularly in research with a small sample size such as this, social desirability bias

may be minimised by eliminating the mid-point category from Likert scales (Garland, 1991) This is supposed to be due to the tendency of respondents to provide answers that they perceive to be socially acceptable rather than answers that are based on their actual feelings and opinions Thus, it was the researcher's contention that with the small sample size available, the use of a 4-point Likert Scale would provide more meaningful data for this particular study

3 3 Pilot Test

To ensure quality in relation to the format of the survey as well as the terms used in the questionnaire, a pilot survey was administered Some modifications were made to the survey questionnaire following the pilot run in response to the feedback received from the 4 respondents that took the survey These are outlined below

- A four-point scale was employed instead of the original 5-point scale as respondents found it easy to be 'on the fence' with their answers when given an option to do so A detailed explanation of the use of the 4-point scale is discussed in Section 3 2 3

- To avoid confusion, some terms used in the original pilot survey were changed For example, the work "overtime" was changed to "working after 6 o'clock" since overtime is not a term used within "The Company's" office setting and none of the respondents would be eligible for overtime pay

3 4 Data Collection

The respondents of the survey questionnaire comprised of the total population of the organisation, 8 of whom are Managers and 20 are at staff level The survey was self-administered and conducted using an on-line tool, Survey Monkey, which allowed the

participants practical access to the survey questionnaire whilst maintaining their anonymity Respondents were not asked for any identifiable data The only identification each respondent was asked to provide was the department in which they belong The anonymity of the respondents was communicated clearly as this was deemed to be necessary in ensuring that they remained comfortable with being straight forward and honest in their responses, a must in retaining reliability of the results (Saunders et al, 2009)

In line with research ethical standards, it was also made clear to the respondents that the data gathered during this study including the identities of those that took part be kept confidential within the duration of the study and afterwards

3 5 Semi-Structured Interviews

One-to-one semi-structured interviews were conducted with one member of management and two members of staff – one from the Administration team and another from the Legal & Compliance team The interviewees were chosen at random However, the departments from which the interviewees were chosen were picked due to the significant value that their input may have on clarifying certain issues around the results, which are described in the next chapter

One-to-one interviews were deemed more appropriate than group interviews or focused group discussions as they would maintain the confidentiality of the interviewees' answers, which was considered vital in acquiring honest and open feedback These interviews would also decrease the potential for group influence in the respondents' answers and would allow them to elaborate on their views and opinions regarding the subject matter (Saunders et al, 2009) According to Saunders et al (2009), during group interviews, individuals may

privately disagree with the group but may publicly agree to group opinions Aside from the knowledge gained during one-to-one interviews, rich qualitative data may also be gained by the researcher with the use of verbal communication through observation (Nagy Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2005)

An interview schedule was used as a basis for the semi-structured interviews with a list of themes to be discussed during the interview process Each respondent was asked the same questions, which were designed based on the results of the survey questionnaire but were asked by the researcher in an order according to the flow of the conversation taking place In particular, the questions were surrounding engagement in the context of the interviewees' working environment In some cases, sub-questions were added to clarify certain points that were brought up by the interviewee's answers

The questions posed in the interviews allowed the researcher to gain valuable insight into the differences in opinions between management and staff It also allowed the researcher to add significance and depth to the data obtained from the survey questionnaire The responses were recorded through careful note taking The interviews required the researcher to establish and maintain rapport with the participants throughout the process

In order to prevent interviewer bias from occurring, certain preparations were made in advance of the interviews taking place Questions were prepared in advance that were free from any jargon that the interviewees may not understand and kept the questions clear and concise A neutral tone of voice was also used to enable the interviewee to understand the questions being asked Questions were arranged in such a way that the more personal and potentially more sensitive questions were asked towards the end of the interview when rapport had been established

The data gathered through this method was used as a supplement to the quantitative data gathered through the survey questionnaire Thus, the context of the interview was based on the results of the questionnaire The results of the interviews were then used to support the initial qualitative results and provide a deeper understanding of the respondents' opinions and recommendations

3 6 Data Analysis

3 6 1 Cross-Tabulations

Cross-tabulations were used to segment data sets in order to examine differences between subgroups, which included the different departments within 'The Company' This made it easier to draw out comparisons within the groups This was essential in analysing the differences in results between management and non-management staff

3 6 2 Calculating the Correlation Coefficient

A simple correlation calculation was done in order to aid the process of comparing the relationship of each factor with engagement levels within each department being studied This was useful in identifying the factors that were most closely related to employee engagement within 'The Company' The overall results for each factor being studied, namely, Meaningfulness, Psychological Safety, Psychological Availability, Work Role Fit, Co-Worker Relations, Management Relations, Co-Worker Norm Adherence, Resources, and Self-Consciousness were compared to the overall engagement result for each department

The strength of the relationship was calculated using simple correlation, which *"enables you to quantify the strength of the linear relationship between two ranked or*

numerical variables" (Saunders et al, 2009 p 459) This calculation was done through a

Microsoft Excel application The formula used to calculate simple correlation is

$$Correl(X \ Y) = \frac{\sum (x-\bar{x})(y-\bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x-\bar{x})^2 \sum (y-\bar{y})^2}}$$

where x and y are the sample means AVERAGE(array 1) and AVERAGE(array 2)

3 7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were taken into account in the conduct of this research study

Respondents were told of the purpose of the research study and were asked to participate

on a voluntary basis A carefully worded cover letter accompanied the survey

questionnaire and request for interview participation Care was taken in ensuring that the

identities of the participants would remain anonymous and that responses would remain

confidential This was done to aid in the reliability of the data but also to ensure that the

respondents would not be under threat of negative consequences within the work place as a

result of their participation in the study Prior consent by "The Company's" top

management was also sought and obtained prior to engaging the employees in this research

study

The semi-structured interviews were also done using an ethical approach The

participants' consent was obtained prior to beginning the interviews and they were

informed that they could stop the interview at any time if they felt that they no longer felt

comfortable with the questions being asked

The data gathered in this study was solely used for the purpose of this research

study The names of the employees of "The Company" as well as the identity of the

organisation being studied have not been disclosed as per the request of top management

CHAPTER 4

DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 Empirical Findings

4.1.1. Respondents' Profile

Figure 1 (Respondent's Profile)

Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Management	28.6%	8
Legal & Compliance	25.0%	7
Administration	7.1%	2
Accounting	39.3%	11
answered question		28
skipped question		0

In order to gather the data needed to answer the first research question regarding the engagement levels for management and staff of 'The Company', a survey questionnaire was distributed to the entire population of the organisation. The graph below shows that 100% of the population responded to the survey questionnaire. Out of 28 employees, 28 answered the survey and 26 respondents completed the survey in full. The graph shows that of the 28 respondents, 8 were managers. The remainder of the respondents were composed of 11 employees from the Accounting Department, 7 from the Legal & Compliance Department and 2 from the Administration Department.

Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.

- Management
- Legal & Compliance
- Administration
- Accounting
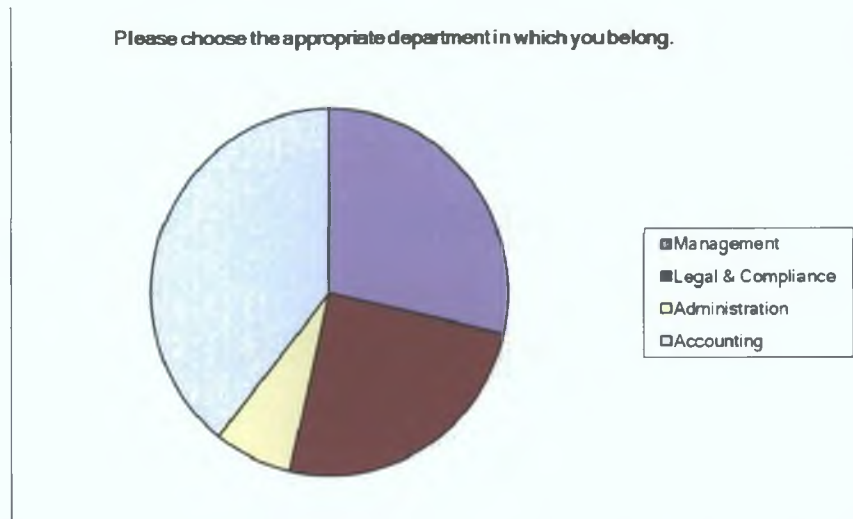
The population of employees being studied is composed of professional accountants, legal & company secretarial professionals and general office administration employees. The proportion of each department against the entire population of respondents is shown in Figures 1 and 2 above.

4.1.2 Engagement Levels

The first part of the survey questionnaire was designed to measure the engagement level of the population being studied. The respondents were asked to rate whether they 1-strongly disagreed, 2- somewhat disagreed, 3- somewhat agreed or 4- strongly agreed to each of the statements posed in the questionnaire. The results seem to show that the overall engagement level within 'The Company' averages at 3.1 on the May, Gilson and Harter Scale for Engagement. A score of 1 reflects high levels of disengagement. A score of 2 reflects moderate levels of disengagement while a score of 3 reflects moderate engagement levels and a score of 4 indicates high engagement levels.

Figure 3 — Overall Engagement
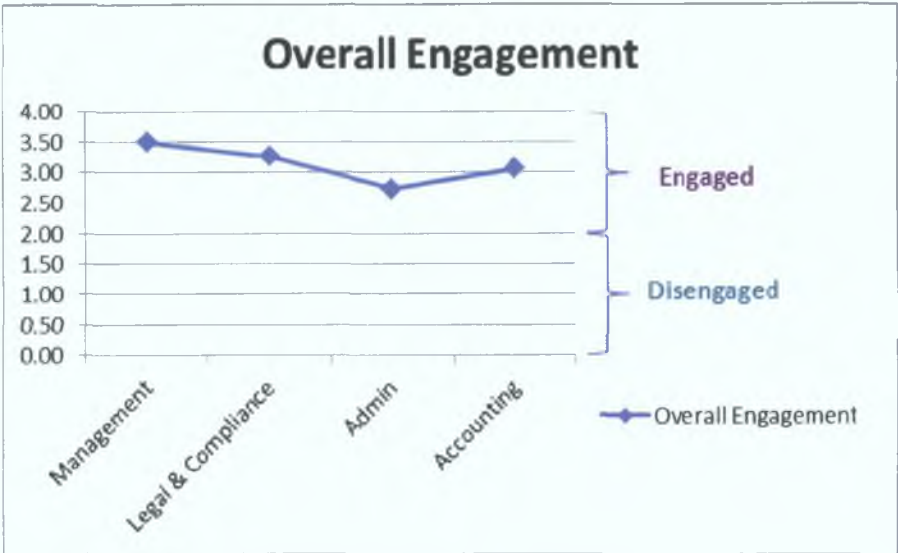
The overall score of 3.1 on the scale suggests that the population, in general, within 'The Company' is moderately engaged based on the May, Gilson and Harter Scale of Engagement. Furthermore, it seems to reflect a range of engagement within 'The Company' from slightly engaged to being at the high end of moderate engagement levels, as seen from the trend of answers in Figure 4.

Figure 4 — Overall Cross-Section of Answers on Engagement Questions
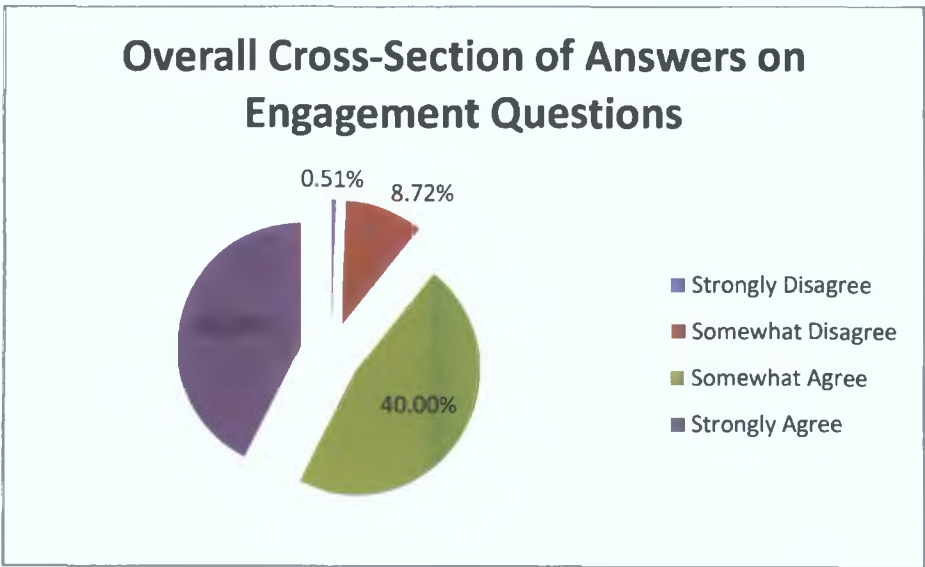
The overall trend found is inconsistent with findings in other engagement studies that have focused on larger organisations as well as nation-wide and international studies It has been found that a general trend tends to occur when measuring engagement within a certain population of employees where respondents fall on either end of the engagement scale

According to Attridge (2009, p 387), engagement levels across groups of employees generally fall within three categories He states that "*those at the bottom represent about 20% of employees who are actively disengaged characterise the first group An opposite group is made up of 20% of employees at the top of the distribution who are highly engaged in their work The remaining group is made up of the middle majority of employees with a moderate level of work engagement*"

The findings in this study show that the bottom group, who are referred to as "actively disengaged", seems to be virtually absent from the results in this study of 'The Company' None of the respondents being studied fell under the "actively disengaged" category This may be a function of the smaller sample size used in this study or may indeed show that the employees in 'The Company' are more engaged than the norm The seeming lack of actively disengaged employees in the organisation being studied may be a positive outcome since disengaged employees are described as *not only being unhappy in their work but also actively acting out their unhappiness in the work place* - affecting their own productivity, their colleagues, and most importantly, the organisation's customers (Simon, 2011) Another possible explanation for the results could also be the recent high turnover that occurred within 'The Company' in the last year, where 8 employees, who may have been unhappy with their work, left the organisation
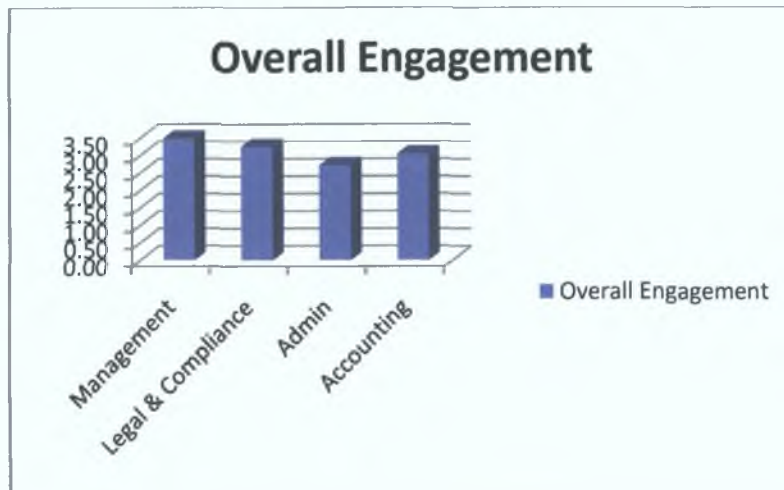
Another important point to note from the results on the engagement scale is the comparison of results for management and non-management staff. An engagement score of 3.5 clearly shows that management have reported a slightly higher level of engagement compared to other staff members within 'The Company', who averaged at an engagement score of 3.

An engagement score of 3.5 shows that management are on the higher end of the 'Moderately Engaged' level. When broken down according to engagement within the different departments, management is followed by the Legal & Compliance Department with an average score of 3.2. The Accounting department follows with a reported engagement level of 3. The department with the lowest reported engagement level is the Administration department, with a score of 2.7, which shows a lower level of engagement, although not within the "disengaged" level, as illustrated in Figure 3 above.

The questions in the survey relating to engagement were also broken down according to cognitive engagement, emotional engagement and physical engagement.

Figure 6

Physical, Emotional & Cognitive Engagement by Department
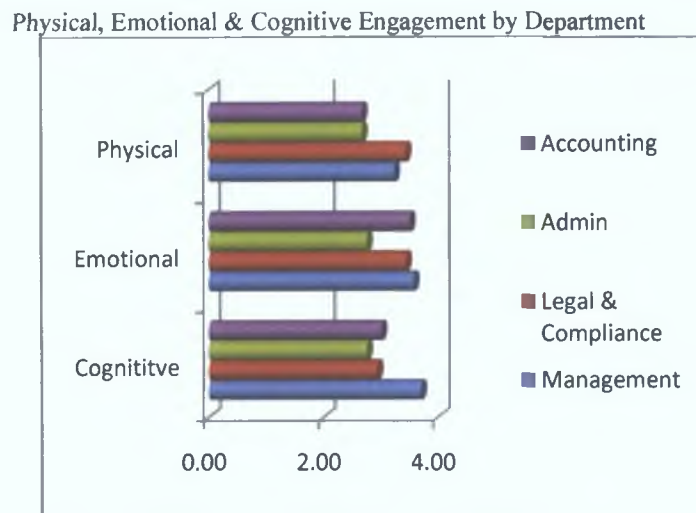
From these results, it can be observed that management have reported higher levels of engagement for each component of engagement with a score of 3.69 for cognitive engagement, 3.57 for emotional engagement and 3.23 for physical engagement. This is slightly higher than the engagement levels reported by the rest of the staff, which averages at 2.9 for cognitive engagement, 3.2 for emotional engagement and 2.9 for physical engagement as seen in Figure 6.

These findings seem to be consistent with the results of another study cited by Robinson et al (2004) of more than 10,000 employees in the UK. It reported that one of the key findings of the study related higher levels of engagement with seniority in the employees' roles. Specifically, it stated that executives and managers reported higher levels of engagement than those employees in supporting roles.

The fact that more senior roles require more responsibility and autonomy tends to be related to higher levels of engagement, may be explained by the original definition of employee engagement by Khan (1990, 1992). He states that *"in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during role*

performances" He further expounds that employees use different dimensions of themselves when performing their role within the organisation When they are engaged, they are mentally, emotionally and physically committed to their tasks On the other hand, disengaged employees tend to perform their roles passively and with apathy According to Hochschield (1983), the latter type of behaviour is more common in roles that are robotic or automatic in nature

This contention was further confirmed by a Towers Perrin (2003) survey, which reported that the chances of being engaged increased the more senior the individual's role was in the organisation This was further validated by BlessingWhite (2008), who labelled power and position as forces that affect higher engagement levels Specifically, they found that senior managers, managers and hands-on employees exhibited the highest engagement levels while back room or support staff tended to be the least engaged

4 1 3 Factors Relating to Engagement

There are many factors that are believed to be related to or even influence employee engagement These have been described in the review of related literature from authors such as Robinson (2007), Schaufeli, Taris&Rhenen, (2008), Attridge (2009), Armstrong (2009), Thomas & Velthouse, (1990), the Towers Perrin Talent Report (2003), Glen (2006) Simon (2011), the CIPD (2006), Robertson-Smith & Marwick (2009) and others Assessing these factors against the population being studied was deemed important in this study as they would provide further insight into the state of employee engagement of the population These factors were also thought to contribute to the depth of the findings, which would be significant in formulating the recommendations

The factors included in this study were limited to those that were encompassed by the employee engagement Scale of May et al (2004) These included factors relating to psychological meaningfulness, psychological safety, psychological availability, self-consciousness, work-role fit, resources, co-worker relations, co-worker norm adherence and supervisor/manager relations

The attempt to establish a relationship between the levels of engagement found within the different departments in the organisation and the factors of engagement mentioned above was carried out by calculating the correlation score for each factor using Microsoft Excel The results are shown in Table 1

Table 1

	Engagement Correlation
Psychological Meaningfulness	0 59
Psychological Safety	0 84
Psychological Availability	-0 58
Work-Role Fit	0 76
Co-Worker Relations	0 33
Manager Relations	-0 08
Co-Worker Norm Adherence	0 36
Resources	-0 08
Self-Consciousness	0 00

The above results seemed surprising at first glance as they were unexpected. It was initially anticipated that all of the factors would be strongly related with the overall engagement results in each group being studied. The results seem to indicate that Psychological Safety, Work-Role Fit and Psychological Meaningfulness are quite strongly related with the engagement results for 'The Company'. Co-Worker Relations, Co-Worker Norm Adherence seem to be slightly related with the overall engagement results while Manager Relations, Self-Consciousness and Psychological Availability all seem to have a weak relationship with the respondents' overall engagement Results. A visual representation of the results is shown in Figure 10 below.

Figure 7
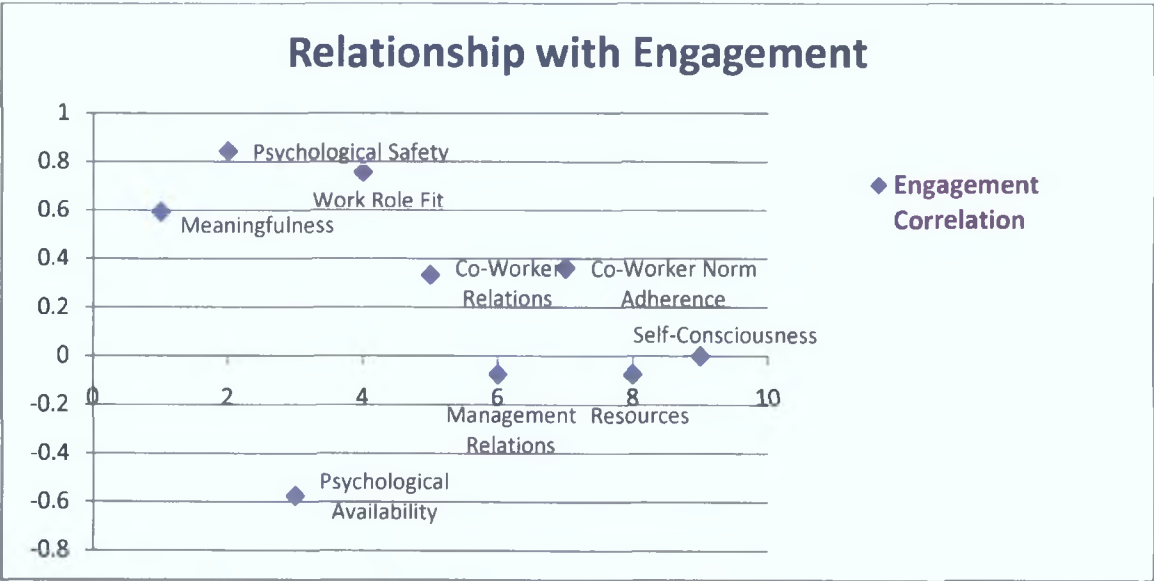
In order to make sense of the above findings, a closer look at the results for each factor was essential. Thus, the next section looks at the findings for each factor individually using the results of the survey, the literature available, as well as the results of the semi-structured interviews that were conducted to further clarify some of the findings. Detailed notes of the results of the three semi-structured interviews conducted are available in Appendix F.

4.1.3.1 Meaningfulness

Figure 8
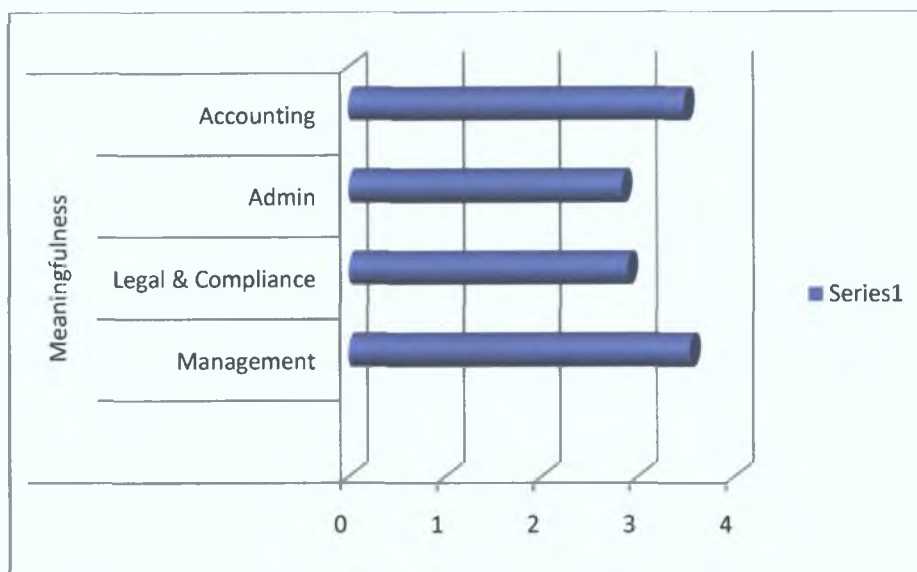
The first factor examined was that of psychological meaningfulness. This is *"the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideas or standards"* (May et al, 2004). The respondents were asked whether they felt that the work they do on their job is important to them, whether they felt the activities are personally meaningful to them, and whether they felt that the work they do in their jobs is valuable. Aside from a slightly higher rating on the statement of whether they felt that the work they do on their job is valuable, where the Accounting team scored the highest out of all departments with a total score of 3.73 out of 4, management scored the highest overall score of 3.54. This was followed by the Accounting team with 3.48, then the Legal & Compliance team with 2.89 and finally the Administration team with 2.83 average score out of 4.

This factor was found to have a correlation score of .59 when compared to the engagement levels found in each respondent group. The results showed that those groups who had higher engagement levels also showed higher levels of psychological

meaningfulness whilst the group that showed lower levels of engagement, such as the Administration team, showed low results in psychological meaningfulness

According to Khan (1992), psychological meaningfulness is usually related to roles where the employee feels valuable and useful The task characteristics of a role with high meaningfulness scores are normally varied, creative, autonomous and challenging in nature He further explains that employees tend to find roles meaningful when there is a balance between a sense of competence from routine work and growth & learning from new tasks or special projects

On the other hand, roles that are only characterised by routine tasks are less likely to be seen as meaningful (Hochschield, 1983) In the case of the Administration Department of 'The Company', the nature of the work tends to be characterised mainly by routine tasks such as filing, answering phones, and completing spread sheets This does not provide much room for learning new tasks or challenges, which may explain their lower levels of engagement and psychological meaningfulness as compared to the other respondent groups

The results of the semi-structured interview supported this notion Interviewee 2 explained that *"the type of work makes a difference in one's level of engagement"* Interviewee 1 also noted that *"if the work is purely administrative in nature, it is seen as a means to an end rather than a role that allows you to grow and develop to further your career"*

The employees who have scored highly in psychological meaningfulness such as Management, Legal & Compliance and Accounting are described by Interviewee 1 as having made a *"conscious decision to follow a certain career path"*, which their current role supports He further states that*"the employees in the Administration Department may*

have degrees in other areas and the current nature of their work is not in line with their career goals". Interviewee 3, from the Administration team said *"we do the work that most people don't really want to do because it's too tedious. We are given work that other teams don't have time for or they have more important things to focus on. Our work is really based on routine like filing. These things take time but they are not necessarily exciting or fulfilling work"*.

Robinson (2007) suggests that in order to cultivate purpose and meaning in their work, employees need to be proud of what they do. In order to make this connection, organisations need to offer a clear line of sight between individual goals and organisational goals in order to provide employees with a deeper understanding of their contribution to the overall performance of the organisation. The implication of these results for 'The Company' may be in providing a platform for employees to understand the impact of their work towards the goals of their departments and the organisation as a whole.

4.1.3.2 Psychological Safety

Figure 9
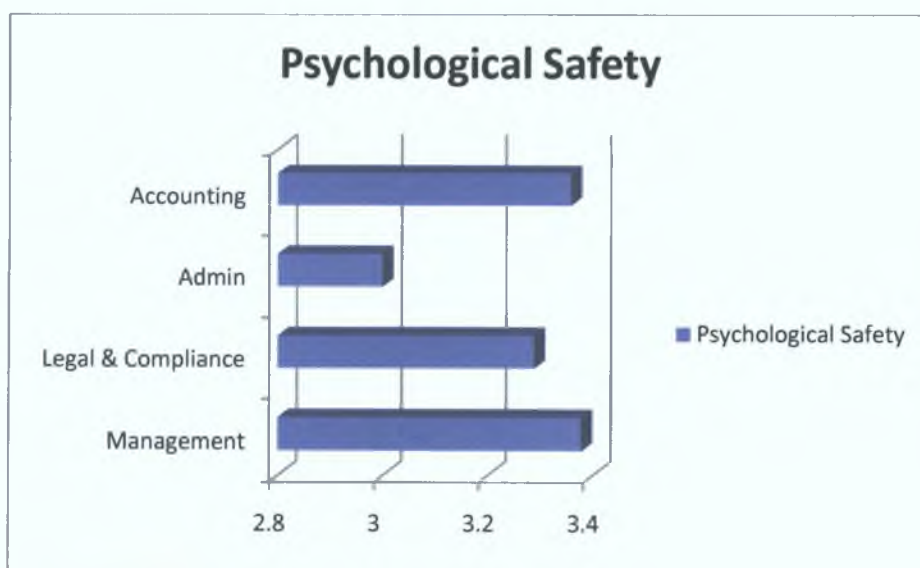
The questions in relation to Psychological Safety or *"the feeling of being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career"* (Khan, 1990, p 708) were around whether the respondents felt that they could express their opinions at work without fear of negative consequences A similar pattern of results emerged on this factor as with Psychological Meaningfulness where management reported the highest feelings of Psychological Safety followed by the Accounting Team, the Legal & Compliance team and the Administration team However, all the results are within scores of 3 and 4 where respondents would have either somewhat agreed or strongly agreed to the statements that were posed Thus, overall, employees in 'The Company' seem to show a sense of Psychological Safety in their job

The high scores in relation to Psychological Safety could be an indication that the overall working environment within 'The Company' appears to be safe to its employees (Edmondson, 1999) According to Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard & Werner (1998), feelings of psychological safety may indicate that boundaries surrounding acceptable behaviour are well understood by employees It may also indicate that positive co-worker relationships and supportive manager-employee relationships are present within the organisation

The results indicate that this factor was found to have the highest score in terms of its relationship with the engagement levels within the organisation This may be explained by the results of other studies such as those by Robinson et al (2004) and Lockwood (2007) who have claimed that employees' opinions about and their experience of their daily working life and workplace culture are strongly correlated with engagement This has been supported by Glen (2006), who asserts that a safe working environment may play a large role in predicting employee engagement

4 1 3 4 Psychological Availability

Psychological Availability "*assesses the readiness, or confidence, of a person to engage in his/her work role given that individuals engage in many other life activities*" (May et al, 2004, p 17-18) The respondents were asked whether they somewhat/strongly agreed or somewhat/strongly disagreed to the following statements 'I am confident in my ability to handle competing demands at work', 'I am confident in my ability to deal with problems that come up at work', and 'I am confident in my ability to display the appropriate emotions at work' The results show a very different result to the rest of the data gathered previously For this variable, the Administration team scored the highest with a score of 4 out of 4 followed by the management team with 3 5, the Accounting team with 3 18 and the Legal & Compliance team with a score of 3 14

The scores suggest that the overall result in terms of Psychological Availability of respondents is at the higher level, with all of the Administration team strongly agreeing to the statements posed Only one manager, one Accountant and two Legal & Compliance employees reported that they did not feel confident in their ability to display appropriate emotions at work

This factor with a correlation score of -0 58, had the lowest score found among all the factors being examined in this study This may mean that the results did not indicate a strong relationship between the results relating to Psychological Availability and the levels of engagement found in each respondent group The groups that had reported lower engagement levels, such as the Administration team, had higher scores in Psychological Availability, than those respondents that reported higher levels of engagement such as the Legal & Compliance team

This seems to suggest that within the context of this study, the employee's perception of confidence in their ability to deal with problems at work, deal with competing demands of work or confidence in displaying the appropriate emotions at work does not necessarily relate to their level of engagement with their work In the case of Administration, for example, they seem to perceive themselves as having the physical, emotional and physical resources necessary to engage in their work, although do not display high levels of engagement

Again, this may be explained by the nature of the work within each respondent group being studied From the semi-structured interviews, it was explained by the interviewee from Administration and Legal & Compliance that their confidence in the aspects of the role as described above is a result of their experience in performing these roles, which has made them experts in their roles However, once all the tasks within a role are mastered, there is not much room for personal development, learning or growth, which could result in lower engagement levels

It is important to note, however, that since the results for all respondent groups are 3 1 or above, the employees within 'The Company' all seem to display moderate to high levels of Psychological Availability Nonetheless, the implication of these results for the organisation is that there is still room for improvement, especially for roles that are administrative in nature

'The Company' may benefit from looking at enriching certain roles that present the lowest engagement levels The Gallup Organisation, as presented in a paper by Levinson (2007) found that there is a definite link between engagement and employee development Melcrum (2007), for example, found that opportunities for advancement and development within a role were important drivers of engagement Additionally, researchers found that

having a personal development plan had a positive impact on engagement levels (Robinson et al, 2007).

4.1.3.5 Work-Role Fit

In terms of Work-Role Fit, the previous pattern emerges once again where management reported the highest levels with a score of 3.25, followed by Accounting with3.13, Legal & Compliance with 2.53, and the Administration team averaging a score of 2.This means that 7 out of 8 managers, 9 out of 10 Accountants, 4 out of 8 Legal & Compliance employees and 1 out of 2 from the Administration team somewhat or strongly agreed that their job fits how they see themselves.

Figure 10
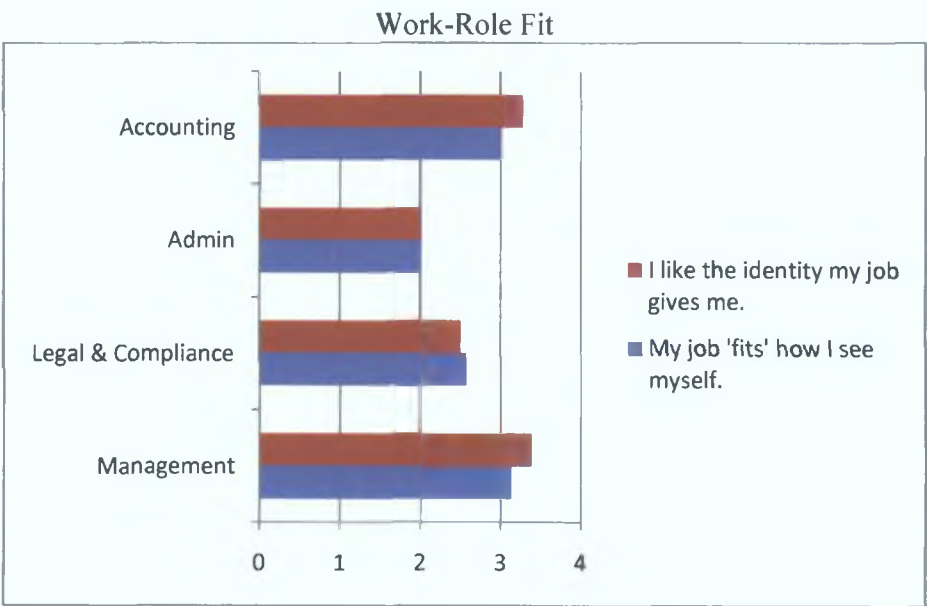
Work-Role Fit

Work-Role Fit also had a relatively high correlation score with the engagement levels within the respondent groups with a score of .76. This indicates that the scores of employees in relation to engagement coincided with their reported perception of fit with their own work roles.

These results emphasize the significance of having the right people for the right job The implication of the results for the organisation is in ensuring that the right candidates fill each role from the early stages of recruitment O'Malley (2000) notes that not all individuals fit certain roles It would therefore benefit the organisation to hire, train and develop the type of person who is likely to do well in the specific setting and role within the organisation

4 1 3 6 Rewarding Co-Worker Relationships & Co-Worker Norm Adherence

The perceived quality of co-worker relationships within 'The Company' was determined by asking the respondents whether they moderately/strongly agreed or disagreed to statements concerning their interactions with their co-workers Again, management scored highest with a 3 59 average followed by Administration with 3 37, Accounting with 3 225 and finally by Legal & Compliance with 3 14 These results show a relatively high level of rewarding co-worker relationships with only 2 employees from Legal & Compliance and 1 from Accounting stating that they did not trust their co-workers

Co-Worker Relations
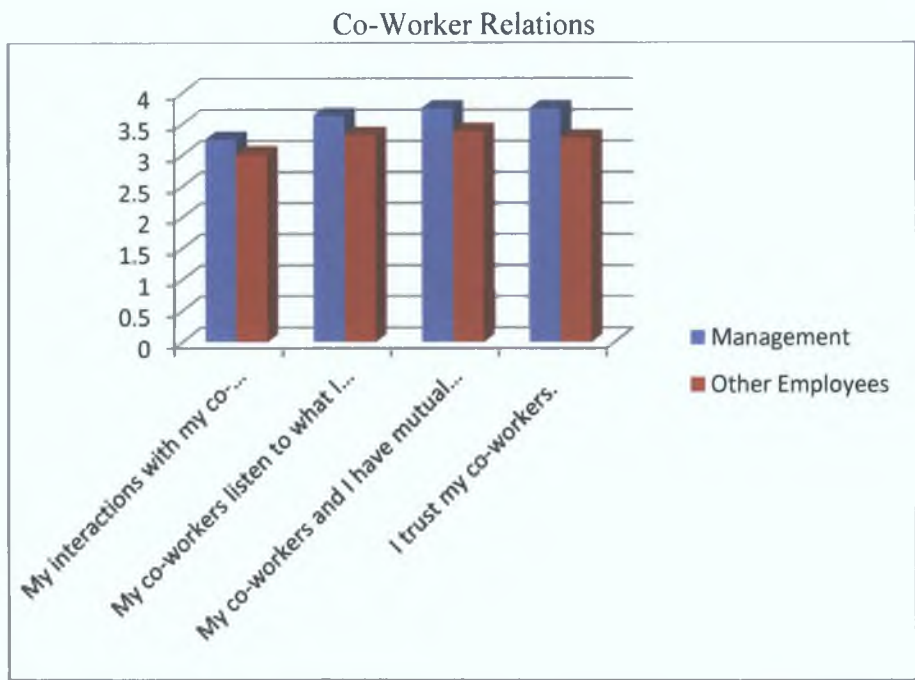
The results also seem to show a high level of co-worker norm adherence within the organisation. 17 out of the 27 that answered the question, somewhat/strongly agreed that they do not rock the boat with their co-workers while 24 out of 27 respondents somewhat/strongly agreed that they do what is expected of them by their co-workers. This includes 5 and 7 managers respectively.

Both factors, namely "Rewarding Co-Worker Relationships" and "Co-Worker Norm Adherence" had a moderately positive relationship with the reported engagement levels for each respondent group with a coefficient of 0.33 and 0.36 respectively. Although the numerical results for these factors are largely positive for each employee group, it essential for 'The Company' to maintain an environment where strong and positive co-worker relationships exists.

Lockwood (2007) and Glen (2006) have found that workplace culture is largely a factor for setting the tone for high engagement. Trust and good relations with colleagues increases the likelihood of engagement since employees tend to feel respected and valued

and are willing to exert more effort in the pursuit of success for the whole team (Glen, 2006)

4 1 3 7 Supportive Manager Relationship

Similar to the results in relation to Psychological Availability, the Administration team scored the highest with an average of 3 62, closely followed by management with 3 59, then by Accounting with 3 30 and finally by Legal & Compliance with an average of 3 1 The most significant difference in the results came from Legal & Compliance in their reported answers to whether they felt that their manager encouraged them to participate in important decisions 4 out of 7 respondents disagreed with the statement 3 out of 7 from the Legal &Compliance team also disagreed that their manager keeps informed about how their employees think and feel about things

However, the results for 'supportive manager relationships' does not necessarily relate with higher engagement levels within 'The Company' with a correlation score of - 0 08 To attempt to explain this low level or relationship of scores, a question was posed during the semi-structured interviews
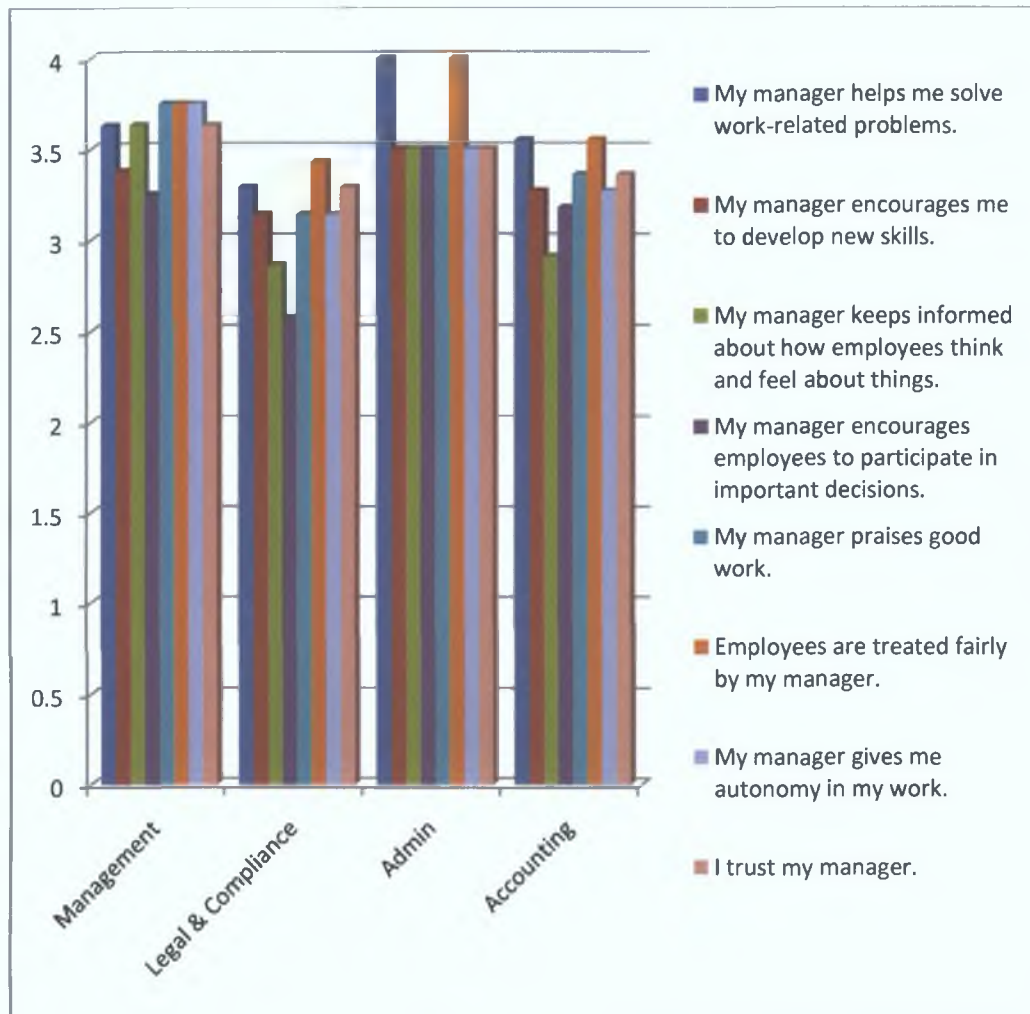
Interviewee 1 explained that "*it boils down to the job itself and the fulfilment it gives you. Having good relationships or capacity will not necessarily change your perception of the role if it's not something you want to do*". "*Engagement is really down to the job itself first, unless you are stuck for some external reasons*". Interviewee 3 stated that "*although engagement has to do with the nature of your work, you would also be affected once the relationship with management becomes toxic. I think there is a tipping point of when the nature of you relationship with your manager will really affect you. If the relationship is ok, even if it's not great, you can still be engaged*".

On the matter of the low score for 'manager relations' within the Legal & Compliance team, the Interviewee 1 explained that " *to some extent we [the Legal & Compliance team] are confused as to who our manager is We report to our supervisor, the head of the department, the GM and the MD They have a lot of interest in the details of our role since they are also directors in the companies we deal with Even if you enjoy the actual work, the constant changes and different messages we are getting from middle and top management have made people want to leave*"

Interviewee 2, a manager/head of a department, noted that "*he* [the General Manager] *is chairing and leading those meetings* [weekly departmental meetings]*rather than allowing the head of the department to do so I think the role of senior managers should be more strategic in nature and they should leave the operational tasks to us as middle managers How can the manager engage their team if there is always an influence from top management, especially in these weekly meeting forums?* He further added that "*we are over-managed*"

The findings within the context of this study for 'The Company' seem to indicate that a need to further investigate whether factors relating to the individual's perceptions and work itself need to go hand-in-hand with external factors such as management and co-worker relationships as positive perceptions of the employee's relationship with Management did not appear to have a strong relationship with the engagement levels, particularly when the respondents showed a highly positive relationship with management but lower engagement levels, such as the Administration Department On the other hand, the group that had relatively low results in manager relations did have a slightly lower level of engagement as well, as seen with the Legal & Compliance team

The implication of these results to 'The Company', given that it aims to further increase its engagement levels for all the respondent groups, is to assess its management structure and style The Corporate Leadership Council studied 50,000 employees in 2004 as cite by Robertson-Smith & Marwick (2009) found that 22 out of the 25 drivers of employee engagement relate to the manager These included clear articulation of goals, realistic performance expectations, flexibility and adaptive management styles The CIPD (2007) also found that the opportunity for upward feedback, communication and consultation systems as well as managers who are fair and visibly committed to the company are drivers of engagement

4 1 3 8 Resources

This factor looked at the individual's perception of whether they possess the necessary resources to meet the physical, emotional and cognitive demands of their work In terms of the respondents' perception of the availability of personal resources in their jobs, they were asked whether they felt overwhelmed by the things going on at work of whether they felt physically used up at the end of the work day The results seem to show that management has a higher level of perceived resources available in their jobs than the other employees However, management scored 2 8 out of 4 while the rest of the employees scored 2 6 out of 4, which is not a large difference

These results seem to indicate that 46% of the entire population feel overwhelmed by what is going on at work with 13 employees either somewhat or strongly agreeing to this statement including 2 managers. Furthermore, 11 out of the 28 respondents somewhat/strongly agreed that they felt physically used up at the end of the workday including 3 managers.

The relatively low results in relation to perceptions of personal resources within the organisation may indicate that 'The Company' may have to examine its effects on employees' work-life balance. The semi-structured interviews included comments such the existence of *"policies that are inflexible"*, *"being in trouble if you're 5 minutes late"* from Interviewee 1, *and "longer hours than other companies"* from Interviewee 3 in relation to explaining the possible explanations for this result. Interviewee 2 noted that *"The Company' follows working hours of 9AM to 6PM compared to the norm within the industry of 9AM to 5PM or 5:30PM"*.

According to Sonnentag (2003, p. 519), *"sufficient recovery during leisure time supports physical and psychological well-being and equips people with the resources needed to be engaged and show dedication, vigour and absorption at work"*. Thus, this

may imply a need to for 'The Company' to assess its policies that affect its employees' work-life balance.

4.1.3.9 Self-Consciousness

Self-consciousness is an individual's preoccupation about how others perceive or judge them (May et al, 2004).16 out of all 28 respondents moderately/strongly agreed that they worry about how people at work perceive them, including 50% of the management team. 17 out of the 28 respondents, including 5 out of 8 managers, also moderately/strongly agreed that they are afraid that their failings will be noticed by others at work.

Figure 14
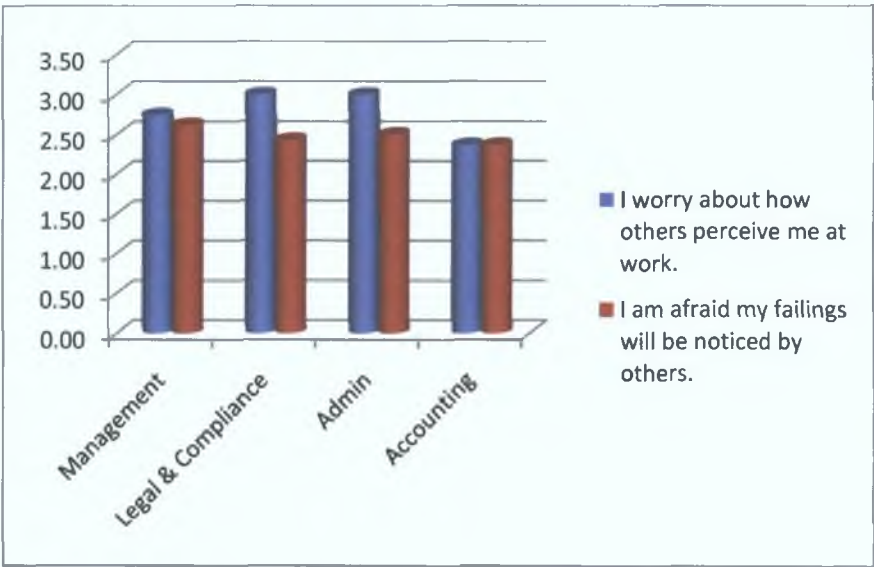
The correlation score for 'self-consciousness' compared to each department's overall engagement levels was found to be 0. This may indicate that although the respondents seem to have a higher level of self-consciousness, it did not follow that higher engagement levels scores appeared. However, the results seem to suggest that the respondents tend to monitor the social environment around them and adapt their

behaviours accordingly (May et al, 2004) This may help to explain the high scores in 'supportive co-worker relationships' within 'The Company'

4 2 Recommendations in Relation to Improving Engagement Levels

At the end of the survey questionnaire, the respondents were asked to indicate their recommendations for 'The Company' in order to further increase the level of employee engagement among staff This was an open question that allowed the respondents to answer freely These recommendations are outlined in detail in Appendix C The results are enumerated below according to the themes of the responses

4 2 1 Trust and Autonomy of Work

The first theme that came about was in relation to the need for high trust levels within 'The Company' and autonomy of work The employees' answers pointed out *"providing autonomy in their work"*, *"trusting employees"*, *"treating employees with respect"*, and *"giving responsibility, autonomy, and trust to its employees"* as being important

Interviewee 1, from the Legal & Compliance Department, clarified that an issue exists whereby *"we are being micro-managed by top management- it is quite restrictive"* *" managers should stop picking at small things that people have done and focus on the results of their work"*

These findings are consistent with what the CIPD (2007), Cleland, Mitchinson, & Townend (2008) and Lockwood's (2007) findings, which showed that trust and autonomy are critical drivers that underpin engagement Autonomy in a role as well the control bestowed upon the individual employee is essential in a high-trust employment

relationship A high trust relationship between the employer and employee is a determinant of engagement as it allows for a certain amount of freedom within the employee's role (Lockwood, 2008)

4 2 2 Participative Decision-Making

Participative decision-making was another theme that was observed in the answers to the open-ended question regarding employee recommendations Answers included *"employee participation"*, *"make sure people feel involved in decision making (at an appropriate level)"*, and *"that employees' views are listened to"*

The CIPD (2007) proposes initiatives that allow for opportunities for upward feedback, and effective consultation systems as drivers of engagement When employees feel involved through a collaborative leadership style, their engagement levels tend to increase (Macey & Schneider, 2008)

4 2 3 Good Management

A third theme that came about was to do with what employees described as good management This is not surprising since an organisation's leadership and management usually has an indirect impact on employees' engagement behaviours (Macey& Schneider, 2008) According to a study by Cleland (2008), employees' engagement levels were influenced by the way a manager listens, provides feedback, makes time for employees, respect individuals, is fair, develops and encourages his employees

These are not different from the recommendations of the employees in 'The Company' who recommended that *"mangers should walk the talk"*, *"managers should provide feedback in relation to progress- whether it be positive or negative"* and *"better*

line managers- as some managers do not have a good attitude toward the work or the business in general"

4 2 4 Career Advancement

The next set of recommendations was in relation to career progression and advancement Recommendations included *"encouraging career and personal development through training and support"*, *"giving more independence to the HR team"*, *"taking ownership and planning people's careers as far as possible"*, *"giving people a roadmap and show them what they can achieve and how they can achieve it"*, and *"everyone should be made to realise the opportunities there are for the company and the constraints on it due to the economic circumstances"*

Melcrum's (2007), and Sinclair, Robertson-Smith & Henessy's (2008) studies found that career advancement were often highly rated by employees as a predictor of engagement Development opportunities in general have been found by studies cited by Robinson et al (2007) as enablers that increase the prevalence of engagement behaviours in employees

4 2 5 Work Enrichment, Learning & Development

Work enrichment, learning and development also came about in the participants' recommendations In particular, they mentioned the following *"encouraging career and personal development through training and support"*, *"everyone should become more developed constantly in relation to soft skills and technical ability"*, *"give people the opportunity to take on different and challenging work"*, *"give people an opportunity to work with different people within a department or in different departments to broaden their*

knowledge and develop relationships with other people in other departments", "give useful training", "give some rewards and a little more responsibility, step by step", "a variety in workload and training", "use technology to eliminate/reduce chore work", and "reviewing and balancing workloads across the group"

Reviewing job profiles and putting in place job enrichment initiatives may be a good start in promoting enrichment of work This area should be addressed by 'The Company' since the results show that factors relating to the work itself such as meaningfulness and work-role fit are highly related to engagement levels, as seen in the previous section of this chapter Moreover, the presence of a personal development plan, performance management and development processes in organisation are found to have positive effects on engagement (Robinson et al, 2007) Conversely, employees who had not received recent training or development were found to have lower engagement levels

4 2 6 Work-Life Balance

Many of the recommendations provided related to improving work-life balance within the organisation This is not surprising as authors such as Burud & Tumolo (2004) and Bachman (2002) have found that employee productivity, commitment, health and employee retention, which ultimately lead to engagement, are highly affected by positive human capital practices and benefits In particular, these practices were found to emphasize positive mental health, work-life balance and company-wide wellness

The respondents mentioned the following recommendations *"providing a positive work-life balance", "the company should concentrate on what it believes a "great place to work" is", "show flexibility where possible", "more talk with employees", "less formality,*

more flexibility", "keep the employees happy because happy employees will equals happy clients", "casual Friday every Friday", and "reviewing and balancing workloads"

The semi-structured interviews were used to clarify some of these recommendations and to provide specific examples All three interviewees mentioned flexibility in terms of working time as an example Interviewee 1, from Legal & Compliance, mentioned that *"leaving or arriving 5 minutes late should not cause a big drama"*, Interviewee 2, a manager, recommended that *"flexi-time or even shorter working hours should be given during low periods so that people have an incentive to work longer hours when needed during high periods the nature of the business allows us to predict which months are the busiest and quietest"*

4 2 7 Good Communication

Lastly, good communication was also observed as a recurring theme in the respondents' recommendations Some of these included *"improved communication", "improvement in the listening attitude of management," "make employees feel part of structure and decision making at appropriate level", "brand awareness, emphasis on client importance", "more communication between departments with regards updates on clients", ' more updates about what is happening across the group as a whole and what is happening on a daily basis in the company", "listen to employee concerns and ideas",* and, *"listen your employees and try to find compromise"*

Taking action on these recommendations could add value to the organisation since it has been found that effective communication with employees is highly linked with organisational financial performance (Watson Wyatt, 2005, 2007) Moreover, these studies found that companies who had effective communication strategies also had higher

engagement levels of up to four times the level of other companies Watson Wyatt termed

this the *communication-profit* effect

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

5 1 Conclusions

This study was aimed at examining employee engagement within the context of 'The Company' Although the literature on the subject of employee engagement may present different and sometimes conflicting views regarding its definition, measurement and the factors that influence its occurrence, they agree on its positive outcomes for the organisation Some of the benefits of a highly engaged workforce have been enumerated as encompassing increased levels of employee productivity, customer loyalty, profitability, employee retention & loyalty, among others Thus, it appears to be good businesses practice for organisations to study employee engagement

The first research question posed in this study was in relation to identifying the current level of engagement within 'The Company' By using the May, Gilson and Harter Scale of Engagement, it was found that the overall population scored an average of 3 1 on the scale This indicates a moderate level of engagement Furthermore, it was also found that the range of engagement within the different departments studied varied from slightly engaged to being at the high end of moderate engagement levels The findings also showed an absence of employees who are "actively disengaged" within the organisation

These results indicate that, overall, employees in 'The Company' generally tend to employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally when performing their work Furthermore, these employees may tend to show some investment of their personal resources, in the form of time and effort, to the successful completion of their tasks at work

The second objective of this study was to identify any differences in engagement levels between Managers and Employees within 'The Company' It was found that a difference, indeed, existed Management reported a slightly higher level of engagement compared to the staff members within 'The Company', which coincided with the researcher's prediction and the literature Management displayed engagement levels at the higher end of the 'Moderately Engaged' level while the rest of the staff presented engagement levels at the lower end of the 'Moderately Engaged' level

Management also reported higher levels of engagement for each component of engagement namely, cognitive, emotional, and physical engagement When breaking down the results according to the factors that are believed to be related to engagement levels in an organisation, further differences were found Management rated the following factors higher than other employees Psychological Meaningfulness, Psychological Safety, Work-Role Fit, Co-Worker Relations, Psychological Resources and Self-Consciousness However, management scored slightly lower than the Administration team in relation to factors such as Manager Relations and Psychological Availability Management also scored lower than the rest of staff in relation to Co-Worker Norm Adherence

The implication of these results for 'The Company' is that, although its employees seem to be moderately engaged, there are some areas that can be improved on The lower level of Psychological Meaningfulness in certain departments suggests a clear line of sight between individual goals and organisational goals needs to be established in order to provide employees with a deeper understanding of their contribution to the overall performance of the organisation

The study also seems to indicate that within the context of 'The Company', Psychological Safety, Work-Role Fit and Psychological Meaningfulness are quite strongly

related with employee engagement levels Co-Worker Relations, Co-Worker Norm Adherence seem to be slightly related with the employee engagement results while Manager Relations, Self-Consciousness and Psychological Availability all seem to be somewhat weakly related with the respondents' overall engagement Results

Some noteworthy findings include, first, the high scores in relation to Psychological Safety, which could be an indication that the overall working environment within 'The Company' appears safe to its employees and further reinforcement of the organisation's culture of trust and professionalism amongst colleagues should be continued Second, that engagement results remained low in departments that scored highly on Psychological Availability This indicated that employees may feel that they have mastered their jobs and are able to cope well with changes in it However, opportunities for further development and growth seem to also be needed for them to remain engaged In cases such as the Administration department, engagement could still be improved by enriching these roles Third, that engagement levels were low in some departments that showed a high level of 'Supportive Manager Relations' The findings within the context of this study for 'The Company' seem to indicate that a need to further investigate whether factors relating to the individual's perceptions and work itself need to go hand-in-hand with external factors such as Manager Relations and Co-Worker Relations to have an impact on engagement levels

Furthermore, the perceived meaning and fit for the role that employees occupy seem to have the strongest link with engagement levels This was quite clear in terms of the strong relationship that occurred between Work-Role Fit and Engagement These results emphasize the significance of having the right people for the right job and vice versa

A few issues regarding management style and structure were reported by the participants, especially in relation to over-management of work, particularly within the Legal & Compliance department The implication of these results to 'The Company', given that it aims to further increase its engagement levels for all the respondent groups, is to assess its management structure and style Furthermore, since almost half of the population indicated that they felt overwhelmed by what is going on at work, 'The Company' may have to examine its effects on employees' work-life balance as well

The analysis of the results provided a deeper insight into the issues that are faced by 'The Company', as perceived by its employees Recommendations for improvement were generated that were aimed at further increasing levels of employee engagement and transforming the population from a Moderately Engaged to a Highly Engaged workforce

5 2 Strengths and Limitations

Overall, the study has its strengths and limitations The fact that the information presented in this study has been based on a careful review of the literature on the subject is a strong point It grounds the results on existing theories and previous studies conducted by academics and business practitioners alike

A second strength is in the use of May, Gilson & Harter's Scale for Engagement, which is based on academic research grounded in the theory of engagement The high response rate from the population allowed the study to present results that are believed to be a representation of the company's overall level of engagement and perceived issues leading to recommendations for improvement Furthermore, breadth and depth of data was made available to the researcher due to the mix of qualitative and quantitative methods used

Utmost care was taken by the researcher in maintaining objectivity in the entire process of the research study However, being a practitioner- researcher, it is not possible to guarantee that the analysis of the data gathered was not subject to any kind of bias resulting from the researcher's own perspective Therefore, the research relied heavily on both the quantitative and qualitative data provided by the subjects of this study in making its inferences to minimise the occurrence of biased and unreliable data

A limitation also exists since the population studied belongs to a single, small-sized organisation Therefore, the results of this study may not be generalisable to other groups of employees Future research may be able to examine the generalisability of the results found in this study to other employee groups in other industries Furthermore, the measure of relationship between engagement and the different factors being studied was measured through a simple correlation calculation and causal inferences could, therefore, not be made Further research may also be needed to further explore the impact on certain external and organisational factors such as 'manager relations' in organisations with different hierarchical structures and employee types It would also be interesting to explore whether certain factors are more significantly related to engagement in other organisational settings where the needs and perceptions of employees may be different

5 3 Recommendations

The aim of this study was ultimately to be able to provide recommendations as to improvements that would enhance 'The Company's' employee engagement levels Although the literature on employee engagement does not provide clear guidelines as to the tools and approaches necessary to assess the drivers of engagement within a particular organisation, the results of this study can aid in formulating recommendations within the context of 'The Company'

Employers cannot force their employees to become engaged, however, certain initiatives and policies are believed to create an environment that can influence engagement within the organisational setting The two-way process of engagement, whereby a sense of fairness and trust provided by the organization is reciprocated by employees engaging themselves in their work, aids in this process (Robinson et al , 2004)

"The amount of cognitive, emotional, and physical resources that an individual is prepared to devote in the performance of one's work roles is contingent on the economic and socio-emotional resources received from the organization" (Saks, 2006, p 603)

An outline of recommendations is proposed below based on the analysis of the results of this study

5 2 1 A Review of Current Processes

A Robust Recruitment Process

Given the strong relationship between employee engagement levels and Work-Role fit within 'The Company', the need to fill each role with the right candidate is essential A

review of the full recruitment cycle is recommended HR policies such as candidate profiling, person specification that lead to the selection and recruitment of candidates must ensure that the person hired is a right match for the job

Job Design & Enrichment

It is proposed that a review of the job design and job descriptions for each role be done It is recommended that the jobs specifications maintain a balance of a structured description as well as areas for expansion and enrichment A reasonable free hand given to employees may inspire a sense of trust and maintain the employee's need to have a sense of control over their work and their resources An analysis of the kind of skills and competencies needed for each role is needed in order to provide enough autonomy within the required boundaries of the role This will also allow the leaders of the organisation to provide employees with a clear link between the individual's jobs and the greater organisational goals

Furthermore, initiatives for job enrichment such as job and client rotation should also be considered Core tasks and peripheral tasks can be identified so that employees are able to prioritise work properly This will also aid in the reviewing and balancing of workloads across the group

Organisational Structure Review

A review of the hierarchical structure of the organisation and, particularly, the role of managers within the organisation is also recommended It is clear that issues regarding the intervention of top management on issues that are typically dealt with by middle-managers have been communicated by employees Therefore, the scope of each level of

the structure needs to be reviewed and articulated The boundaries for each level of management may need to be defined and communicated to its members

Leadership Development

To reinforce the outcomes of the organisational structure review, it is recommended that a Leadership Development programme be created for management within 'The Company' Developing their leadership and management skills is essential in their daily management of staff in order to facilitate engagement within their teams Furthermore, this will equip management with confidence and competency to deal with management and leadership issues within their scope of responsibility It will also provide management with skills in relation to appropriate leadership styles to use in certain situations at work

Personal Development & Employee Work-Life Balance Initiatives

To address the physical and emotional components of engagement, an assessment of current personal development and work-life balance initiatives needs to be done Given the current financial situation of the organisation, it is suggested that in order to maintain a reasonable balance between employees' work and personal well-being, a benchmarking exercise be conducted within the industry This will allow 'The Company' to gauge the initiatives that other similar companies have implemented within the industry and which initiatives are paying off

A feasibility study is recommended in relation to implementing a flexibility programme This could include flexitime, condensed work weeks, flexibility according to busy business periods, job sharing, telecommuting and video-conferencing This policy has a strong backing from CIPD research, which links flexibility and engagement The 2006

annual report shows that employees on 'flexible contracts tend to be more emotionally engaged, more satisfied with their work, more likely to speak positively about their organisation and less likely to quit than those not employed on flexible contracts '

Training and Development Initiatives

The need for more meaningful training and development opportunities within 'The Company was clear from the feedback of employees   A regular Training & Development needs analysis is recommended in conjunction with the mid-year and end-of-year Performance Appraisals for each employee

Since 'The Company' employs employees from different professions, a linkage initiative is recommended with the professional bodies that employees belong to such as the CIOD, ACCA, ICSA and so on   These linkages will enable the company to broaden its support on development initiatives with its restricted training and development budget

A linkage with training and development initiatives from other offices within 'The Company's' group is also recommended   Technology such as video and telephone conferencing can be used as a tool for training initiatives between offices where learning needs are similar

Regular updates regarding group-wide programmes on learning and development as well as secondment opportunities in other jurisdictions should also be communicated with employees

Communication and Consultation Initiatives

As 'The Company' is a small organisation made up of professionals, there has been an apparent need for employees to feel involved in decision-making   It is recommended

that the weekly team meetings held be led by line managers rather than top management in order to create a safe environment where each team can provide feedback about work and client issues In addition, the monthly general staff meetings can be used as a venue for managers to listen to staff and to discuss larger organisational issues with top management and staff

A regular debriefing session after larger client transactions is also recommended so that learning outcomes and areas for improvement from both the employee's perspective and the manger's perspective can be openly discussed immediately afterwards

A 360 degree feedback process is also recommended This will provide employees with an opportunity to receive feedback from managers and colleagues as well the opportunity to provide feedback to managers and their colleagues in a safe one-to-one setting

5 2 2 Implementing the High Engagement Initiatives

After assessing the above recommended initiatives, it is proposed that a plan be put in place that would outline the initiatives that will be implemented along with the corresponding time lines Pilot tests can be implemented for certain initiatives such as the 360 degree review, cross-jurisdictional training, and others Employees and managers should be able to evaluate the systems and provide feedback Any necessary changes thereafter should be communicated to all employees As this is a small company, a face to face briefing is recommended to enable employees to make clarifications if needed and further suggestions This is important in ensuring that employees and managers buy-in to the new initiatives Furthermore, the implementation process should be planned in such a

way that fairness and consistency are maintained by keeping a transparent and open

approach

5 2 3 Evaluating the Processes

The newly implemented processes should be continuously improved by assessing

their relevance through regular employee and management feedback A yearly review of

these processes is recommended

CHAPTER 6

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APPENDIX A

"THE COMPANY'S" ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

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                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │  Managing Director  │
                    └─────────────────────┘
                              │
                              ▼
                    ┌─────────────────────┐
                    │   General Manager   │
                    └─────────────────────┘
```

Head of Administration & HR	Head of Accounting	Head of Legal & Compliance
Administrator 1 Administrator 2	Deputy Head of Accounting	Legal & Compliance Supervisor (Manager)
	Senior Accountant 1 (Manager Level) Senior Accountant 1 Senior Accountant 2 Accountant 1 Accountant 2 Accountant 3 Accountant 4 Accountant 5 Accountant 6 Trainee Accountant 1 Trainee Accountant 2 Trainee Accountant 3	Legal & Compliance Account Manager 1 Legal & Compliance Account Manager 2 Legal & Compliance Account Manager 3 Legal & Compliance Account Manager 4 Legal & Compliance Account Manager 5 Legal & Compliance Account Manager 6 Graduate Legal & Compliance Manager 1

APPENDIX B

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

A. Survey Invitation Letter:

Dear all,

As part of the Dissertation for my Masters, I am conducting a research project on Employee Engagement. The objective of this study to understand employees' perceptions of their work and the organisation's working environment. Through your participation, I eventually hope to come up with recommendations for improving the working conditions that may affect employee engagement.

Although your participation is voluntary, I would be grateful if you would take part in it as this will contribute to the reliability and validity of the data gathered in the research study.

Your responses will be kept confidential and anonymous. Furthermore, the name of our company or any other sensitive information will not be mentioned in the research paper. You will not be required to give any personal information, only the department in which you belong.

The survey questionnaire is on-line based and completing the survey should only take about 10 minutes. I would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire by this Friday, 06 July.
If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire or about participating in this study, you may contact me directly. Please follow the link below:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ZNFFTS5

Thank you in advance for your co-operation.

Kind regards,
Angela Schloer

B On-Line Survey Questionnaire

Firstly thank you for taking the time to answer this survey!

This survey is confidential and identities of participants will be kept completely anonymous You will be asked a variety of questions about your perception of our your work and the working environment

Completing the survey should only take about 10 minutes Your honest feedback will help in determining what areas of work will need to be improved within our organisation

Please read the questions carefully and chose the answers that reflect how you honestly feel about each area being asked Your answers will be kept completely confidential

Thanks again for your participation!

*1 Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong

○ Management

○ Legal & Compliance

○ Administration

○ Accounting

*2. Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I feel mentally sharp at the end of the workday.	○	○	○	○
Performing my job is so absorbing that I forget about everything else.	○	○	○	○
Time passes quickly when I perform my job.	○	○	○	○
I really put my heart into my job.	○	○	○	○
I get excited when I perform well on my job.	○	○	○	○
I exert a lot of energy performing my job.	○	○	○	○
I stay until the job is done.	○	○	○	○
The work I do on this job is very important to me.	○	○	○	○
My job activities are personally meaningful to me.	○	○	○	○
I feel that the work I do on my job is valuable.	○	○	○	○
I'm not afraid to be myself at work.	○	○	○	○

↑ 3. Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I am confident in my ability to handle competing demands at work.	○	○	○	○
I am confident in my ability to deal with problems that come up at work.	○	○	○	○
I am confident in my ability to display the appropriate emotions at work.	○	○	○	○
My job 'fits' how I see myself	○	○	○	○
I like the identity my job gives me.	○	○	○	○
My interactions with my co-workers are rewarding.	○	○	○	○
My co-workers listen to what I have to say.	○	○	○	○
My co-workers and I have mutual respect for one another.	○	○	○	○
I trust my co-workers.	○	○	○	○
My manager helps me solve work-related problems	○	○	○	○
My manager encourages me to develop new skills	○	○	○	○
My manager keeps informed about how employees think and feel about things.	○	○	○	○

*4. Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
My manager encourages employees to participate in important decisions	○	○	○	○
My manager praises good work	○	○	○	○
Employees are treated fairly by my manager.	○	○	○	○
My manager gives me autonomy in my work.	○	○	○	○
I trust my manager.	○	○	○	○
I avoid working overtime whenever possible.	○	○	○	○
I am afraid to express my opinions at work.	○	○	○	○
I don't 'rock the boat' with my co-workers.	○	○	○	○
I do what is expected of me by my coworkers.	○	○	○	○
I feel overwhelmed by the things going on at work.	○	○	○	○
I feel physically used up at the end of the workday.	○	○	○	○
I worry about how others perceive me at work.	○	○	○	○
I am afraid my failings will be noticed by others.	○	○	○	○

*5. What aspects of your role/ work itself would you consider important?

*6. What aspects of your work environment do you consider important?

*7. What are your recommendations for the company in general in relation to keeping their employees engaged?

APPENDIX C

OVERALL SURVEY RESULTS

Part I: Multiple Choice Items
1.)

Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.		
Answer Options	**Response Percentage**	**Response Count**
Management	28.6%	8
Legal & Compliance	25.0%	7
Administration	7.1%	2
Accounting	39.3%	11
	answered question	28
	skipped question	0

2.)

Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.						
Answer Options	**Strongly Disagree**	**Somewhat Disagree**	**Somewhat Agree**	**Strongly Agree**	**Rating Average**	**Response Count**
I feel mentally sharp at the end of the workday.	3	13	10	2	2.39	28
Performing my job is so absorbing that I forget about everything else.	1	7	15	5	2.86	28
Time passes quickly when I perform my job.	0	3	9	16	3.46	28
I really put my heart into my job.	0	1	11	16	3.54	28
I get excited when I perform well on my job.	0	1	16	11	3.36	28
I exert a lot of energy performing my job.	0	4	13	10	3.22	27
I stay until the job is done.	0	1	14	13	3.43	28
The work I do on this job is very important to me.	1	1	13	13	3.36	28
My job activities are personally meaningful to me.	1	3	14	9	3.15	27
I feel that the work I do on my job is valuable.	0	2	12	14	3.43	28
I'm not afraid to be myself at work.	0	2	15	11	3.32	28
				answered question		28
				skipped question		0

3.)

Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
My manager encourages employees to participate in important decisions.	1	5	13	9	3.07	28
My manager praises good work.	1	1	11	15	3.43	28
Employees are treated fairly by my manager.	0	1	9	18	3.61	28
My manager gives me autonomy in my work.	0	4	9	15	3.39	28
I trust my manager.	2	1	8	17	3.43	28
I avoid working overtime whenever possible.	6	2	9	11	2.89	28
I am afraid to express my opinions at work.	8	12	8	0	2.00	28
I don't 'rock the boat' with my co-workers.	1	9	14	3	2.70	27
I do what is expected of me by my co-workers.	1	2	18	7	3.11	28
I feel overwhelmed by the things going on at work.	9	7	10	2	2.18	28
I feel physically used up at the end of the workday.	6	11	8	3	2.29	28
I worry about how others perceive me at work.	8	4	14	2	2.36	28
I am afraid my failings will be noticed by others.	6	5	14	3	2.50	28
answered question						**28**
skipped question						**0**

4.)

Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

Answer Options	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	Rating Average	Response Count
I am confident in my ability to handle competing demands at work.	1	2	13	12	3.29	28
I am confident in my ability to deal with problems that come up at work.	0	2	15	11	3.32	28
I am confident in my ability to display the appropriate emotions at work.	2	2	8	16	3.36	28
My job 'fits' how I see myself.	2	5	16	5	2.86	28
I like the identity my job gives me.	2	4	12	9	3.04	27
My interactions with my co-workers are rewarding.	0	4	17	7	3.11	28
My co-workers listen to what I have to say.	0	2	14	12	3.36	28
My co-workers and I have mutual respect for one another.	1	1	10	16	3.46	28
I trust my co-workers.	1	3	9	15	3.36	28
My manager helps me solve work-related problems.	1	1	8	18	3.54	28
My manager encourages me to develop new skills.	1	4	9	14	3.29	28
My manager keeps informed about how employees think and feel about things.	2	5	8	13	3.14	28
				answered question		28
				skipped question		0

Part II: Open-Ended Questions (Self-Formulated Questions)

Answers:

What aspects of your role/ work itself would you consider important?		
Answer Options	**Response Count**	
	27	
answered question		27
skipped question		1

Number	Response Date	Response Text
		Autonomy and trust in making decisions regarding my day to day tasks.
1	Jul 18, 2012 2:04 PM	Continuous learning and upgrading of my skills and experience.
2	Jul 17, 2012 3:21 PM	Timely completion of job in hand
3	Jul 17, 2012 3:12 PM	Making sure the filing system is up to date.
		motivating people
		business development
		meeting client commitments and expectations
		meeting employee expectations
4	Jul 17, 2012 8:54 AM	managing time and workload
		* Dealing with clients
		* Meeting the relevant deadline
5	Jul 13, 2012 2:43 PM	* Ensureingout put is to the highest possible standard
6	Jul 12, 2012 11:03 AM	Leadership, commitment, integrity
		Demonstrating leadership and swift decision making.
7	Jul 6, 2012 2:42 PM	Giving staff appropriate training.
8	Jul 6, 2012 2:33 PM	Challenges, learning, experience, knowledge
9	Jul 6, 2012 1:14 PM	Honesty, accountability, interest
10	Jul 6, 2012 11:37 AM	Keeping Managers and colleagues informed about progress. Getting financials signed off on time, finalising working papers for auditors, completing payroll computations accurately and making sure client employees are paid on time.

11	Jul 6, 2012 11 34 AM	Assisting other's work by meeting and respecting deadlines
12	Jul 6, 2012 11 34 AM	Compliance with reporting deadlines Meeting client needs and requests Ensuring managers are aware of any issues with clients
13	Jul 6, 2012 11 24 AM	The freedom to manage and lead The chance to demonstrate my skills and talents
14	Jul 6, 2012 8 37 AM	Challenge, Responsibility, Future Prospects
15	Jul 5, 2012 6 25 PM	Challenging, been given confidence from management to complete work
16	Jul 5, 2012 4 23 PM	Good communication
17	Jul 5, 2012 4 17 PM	client interaction, meeting deadlines & problem solving
18	Jul 4, 2012 1 14 PM	Learning aspect
		Building a strong team
19	Jul 4, 2012 9 52 AM	Improving leadership skills and initiative
20	Jul 3, 2012 2 32 PM	All matters are important one must be very specific at everything It is rewarding
21	Jul 3, 2012 1 47 PM	Encountering challenges and figuring out a way to overcome them
22	Jul 3, 2012 11 00 AM	Good relationships with clients
23	Jul 3, 2012 10 33 AM	Enjoyment, capability, reward
24	Jul 3, 2012 10 20 AM	Challenges, multitasking, learning
25	Jul 3, 2012 10 12 AM	a somewhat rewarding role
		Challenge in delivering, ovecooming obstacles and resolving issues
26	Jul 3, 2012 10 08 AM	relationships with clients and colleagues
27	Jul 3, 2012 10 03 AM	Accuracy, attention to detail, chasing up approvals

What aspects of your work environment do you consider important?

Answer Options	Response Count
	27
answered question	27
skipped question	1

Number	Response Date	Response Text
1	Jul 18, 2012 2:04 PM	High trust and respect from management and colleagues. Good relationship with management and with colleagues.
2	Jul 17, 2012 3:21 PM	Trust, cooperation and appreciation
3	Jul 17, 2012 3:12 PM	The filing. the building the culture
4	Jul 17, 2012 8:54 AM	work colleagues treatment of each other * Clean and tidy office
5	Jul 13, 2012 2:43 PM	* Good Staff moral/ interaction
6	Jul 12, 2012 11:03 AM	-
7	Jul 6, 2012 2:42 PM	Good IT systems and data systems to help the role become more efficient.
8	Jul 6, 2012 2:33 PM	Flat structure, global network, accessibility, clear communication lines
9	Jul 6, 2012 1:14 PM	Respecting each other opinions, backround and etc...
10	Jul 6, 2012 11:37 AM	The people you are working with, the organisation, work commuting time and location of the work.
11	Jul 6, 2012 11:34 AM	The location itself (proximity for having lunch breaks etc) Relationship with co-worker to ensure I'm comfortable with asking questions when I need help.
12	Jul 6, 2012 11:34 AM	Office lay-out and equipment is vital to allow me get on with my work.
13	Jul 6, 2012 11:24 AM	People, facilities, office location
14	Jul 6, 2012 8:37 AM	Functionality and comfort of workspace, Interior Design, Lighting/Heat
15	Jul 5, 2012 6:25 PM	Cleanliness
16	Jul 5, 2012 4:23 PM	Nice and clean work space
17	Jul 5, 2012 4:17 PM	open communication with work colleagues and mutual respect

18	Jul 4, 2012 1 14 PM	People - ease to deal with, atmosphere, openness Atmosphere in company and within each team
19	Jul 4, 2012 9 52 AM	Location and office space All aspects of work are important The social and work side Hiring people that fit into the work force are very important Everyone must
20	Jul 3, 2012 2 32 PM	be part of the team Ensuring that the atmosphere is collegiate and
21	Jul 3, 2012 1 47 PM	respectful
22	Jul 3, 2012 11 00 AM	Atmosphere--good attitudes
23	Jul 3, 2012 10 33 AM	Fair work environment Quality service delivery and keep colleagues
24	Jul 3, 2012 10 20 AM	motivated
25	Jul 3, 2012 10 12 AM	A pleasant friendly environment Friendly supportive environment, inclusive
26	Jul 3, 2012 10 08 AM	confidence level Support from colleagues, timely review and
27	Jul 3, 2012 10 03 AM	approval of work

What are your recommendations for the company in general in relation to keeping their employees engaged?

Answer Options	Response Count
	27
answered question	27
skipped question	1

Number	Response Date	Response Text
		Providing autonomy in their work.
		Trusting employees.
		Treating employees with respect.
		Mangers that walk the talk.
		Encouraging career and personal development through training and support.
1	Jul 18, 2012 2:04 PM	Providing a positive work-life balance.
2	Jul 17, 2012 3:21 PM	Shared responsiblityetc
3	Jul 17, 2012 3:12 PM	...
		everyone to be committed to immediate client satisfaction
		everyone to realise the opportunities there are for the company and the constraints on it due to the econonic circumstances
		everyone to become more developed constantly in relation to soft skills and technical ability
4	Jul 17, 2012 8:54 AM	the company to concentrate on what it believes a "great place to work" is * give people the opportunity to take on different and challenging work.
		* give people an opportunity to work with different people within a dept or in different departments.(to broaden their knowledge and develop releationship with other people in other depts)
5	Jul 13, 2012 2:43 PM	* Give usefull training
6	Jul 12, 2012 11:03 AM	-
7	Jul 6, 2012 2:42 PM	Show flexibility where possible and clear pathways to promotion

8	Jul 6, 2012 2 33 PM	More improved communication, improve listening attitude, make employees feel part of structure and decision making at appropriate level, brand awareness, emphasise on client importance
9	Jul 6, 2012 1 14 PM	More talk with employees, less formality, more flexible
10	Jul 6, 2012 11 37 AM	Keep the employees happy because happy employees will equal happy clients Therefore an organisation must strive to have happy employees in order to be successful
11	Jul 6, 2012 11 34 AM	Giving some rewards and a little more responsibility, step by step
12	Jul 6, 2012 11 34 AM	I think more communication between departments with regards updates on clients Receiving mangers feedback in relation to progress- whether it be positive or negative
13	Jul 6, 2012 11 24 AM	Give more independence to the HR team Take ownership and plan people's careers as far as possible, give people a roadmap and show them what they can achieve and how they can achieve it
14	Jul 6, 2012 8 37 AM	Recognition, Flexible Working Hours
15	Jul 5, 2012 6 25 PM	I think the company does a good job in keeping up to speed with their employees
16	Jul 5, 2012 4 23 PM	More updates about what is happening accross the group as a whole and what is happening on a daily basis in the company
17	Jul 5, 2012 4 17 PM	further local incentives to motivate staff, flex-time
18	Jul 4, 2012 1 14 PM	Learning, responsibility, progression, appropriate compensation, autonomy, trust casual Friday every Friday
19	Jul 4, 2012 9 52 AM	Listen to their concerns and ideas Coffee at weekly meetings
20	Jul 3, 2012 2 32 PM	Encourage to walk around, away from desk to remain focus
21	Jul 3, 2012 1 47 PM	Make sure people feel involved in decision making (at an appriopriate level) and that their views are listened to
22	Jul 3, 2012 11 00 AM	Better line managers Managers do not have a good attitude toward the work or the business in general
23	Jul 3, 2012 10 33 AM	To listen your emploees and try to find compromise
24	Jul 3, 2012 10 20 AM	Employee participation, team building measures
25	Jul 3, 2012 10 12 AM	I feel within an organization it has to strike a fair give and take relationship with employees I think small things like proper casual Fridays and 5 30 finish time add to moral and help increase loyalty and increase over all productivity, decreasing staff turnover It seems counter productive not to allow such Small benefits like that seem to be missing within TMF and I get the feeling are present in all other organizations thus within TMF it reduces employees willingness become fully involved and become fully enthusiastic and about their working environment

use technology to eliminate/reduce chore work

reviewing and balancing workloads,

26	Jul 3, 2012 10 08 AM	improve staff retention
		To keep employess engaged and interested I would suggest
27	Jul 3, 2012 10 03 AM	variety in workload and training

APPENDIX D

SURVEY RESULTS BY DEPARTMENT

Part I: Multiple Choice Questions (From May, Gilson and Harter's (2004) Employee Engagement Scale)

1. Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.

	Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.				
	Management	Legal & Compliance	Administration	Accounting	Response Totals
Management	100.0% (8)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	28.6% (8)
Legal & Compliance	0.0% (0)	100.0% (7)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	25.0% (7)
Administration	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	7.1% (2)
Accounting	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	100.0% (11)	39.3% (11)
answered question	8	7	2	11	28
				skipped question	0

2. Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

		Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.				
		Management	Legal & Compliance	Administration	Accounting	Response Totals
I feel mentally sharp at the end of the workday.	Strongly Disagree	12.5% (1)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	Somewhat Disagree	37.5% (3)	71.4% (5)	50.0% (1)	36.4% (4)	
	Somewhat Agree	25.0% (2)	14.3% (1)	50.0% (1)	54.5% (6)	
	Strongly Agree	25.0% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	rating average	2.63 (8)	2.00 (7)	2.50 (2)	2.45 (11)	2.39 (28)
Performing my job is so absorbing that I forget about everything else.	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	28.6% (2)	50.0% (1)	36.4% (4)	
	Somewhat Agree	62.5% (5)	28.6% (2)	50.0% (1)	63.6% (7)	
	Strongly Agree	37.5% (3)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	rating average	3.38 (8)	2.71 (7)	2.50 (2)	2.64 (11)	2.86 (28)
Time passes quickly when I perform my job.	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	Somewhat Agree	0.0% (0)	28.6% (2)	100.0% (2)	45.5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	100.0% (8)	42.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	45.5% (5)	
	rating average	4.00	3.14	3.00	3.36	3.46

		(8)	(7)	(2)	(11)	(28)
I really put my heart into my job	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	25.0% (2)	42.9% (3)	50.0% (1)	45.5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	75.0% (6)	57.1% (4)	0.0% (0)	54.5% (6)	
	rating average	3.75 (8)	3.57 (7)	2.50 (2)	3.55 (11)	3.54 (28)
I get excited when I perform well on my job	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	12.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	37.5% (3)	71.4% (5)	100.0% (2)	54.5% (6)	
	Strongly Agree	50.0% (4)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	45.5% (5)	
	rating average	3.38 (8)	3.29 (7)	3.00 (2)	3.45 (11)	3.36 (28)
I exert a lot of energy performing my job	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	50.0% (1)	18.2% (2)	
	Somewhat Agree	42.9% (3)	57.1% (4)	50.0% (1)	45.5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	57.1% (4)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	36.4% (4)	
	rating average	3.57 (7)	3.14 (7)	2.50 (2)	3.18 (11)	3.22 (27)
I stay until the job is done	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	

	Somewhat Agree	62 5% (5)	42 9% (3)	50 0% (1)	45 5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	37 5% (3)	57 1% (4)	50 0% (1)	45 5% (5)	
	rating average	3 38 (8)	3.57 (7)	3 50 (2)	3 36 (11)	3 43 (28)
The work I do on this job is very important to me	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	37 5% (3)	28 6% (2)	100 0% (2)	54.5% (6)	
	Strongly Agree	62 5% (5)	42.9% (3)	0 0% (0)	45.5% (5)	
	rating average	3 63 (8)	3 00 (7)	3 00 (2)	3 45 (11)	3 36 (28)
My job activities are personally meaningful to me	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	16 7% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	33.3% (2)	50 0% (1)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	50 0% (4)	16 7% (1)	50 0% (1)	72 7% (8)	
	Strongly Agree	50 0% (4)	33.3% (2)	0 0% (0)	27 3% (3)	
	rating average	3 50 (8)	2 67 (6)	2 50 (2)	3 27 (11)	3 15 (27)
I feel that the work I do on my job is valuable.	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	50 0% (4)	42 9% (3)	100 0% (2)	27.3% (3)	
	Strongly Agree	50 0% (4)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	72 7% (8)	
	rating average	3 50 (8)	3.00 (7)	3 00 (2)	3 73 (11)	3 43 (28)
I'm not afraid to be myself at work	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	12 5% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)	
	Somewhat Agree	37 5% (3)	71 4% (5)	100 0% (2)	45.5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	50 0% (4)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	45.5% (5)	
	rating average	3 38 (8)	3.29 (7)	3 00 (2)	3.36 (11)	3 32 (28)
	answered question	8	7	2	11	28
	skipped question					0

Engagement Survey

SurveyMonkey

Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

		Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.				
		Management	Legal & Compliance	Administration	Accounting	Response Totals
I am confident in my ability to handle competing demands at work	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	Somewhat Disagree	12.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	Somewhat Agree	37.5% (3)	85.7% (6)	0.0% (0)	36.4% (4)	
	Strongly Agree	50.0% (4)	14.3% (1)	100.0% (2)	45.5% (5)	
	rating average	3.38 (8)	3.14 (7)	4.00 (2)	3.18 (11)	3.29 (28)
My job 'fits' how I see myself	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	12.5% (1)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	
	Somewhat Agree	62.5% (5)	42.9% (3)	50.0% (1)	63.6% (7)	
	Strongly Agree	25.0% (2)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	
	rating average	3.13 (8)	2.57 (7)	2.00 (2)	3.00 (11)	2.86 (28)
I like the identity my job gives me	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	16.7% (1)	50.0% (1)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	33.3% (2)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	
	Somewhat Agree	62.5% (5)	33.3% (2)	50.0% (1)	36.4% (4)	
	Strongly Agree	37.5% (3)	16.7% (1)	0.0% (0)	45.5% (5)	
	rating average	3.38 (8)	2.50 (6)	2.00 (2)	3.27 (11)	3.04 (27)

My co-workers and I have mutual respect for one another	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)
	Somewhat Agree	25 0% (2)	42 9% (3)	50 0% (1)	36 4% (4)
	Strongly Agree	75 0% (6)	42 9% (3)	50 0% (1)	54 5% (6)
rating average		3 75 (8)	3 29 (7)	3 50 (2)	3 36 (11)	3 46 (28)
I trust my co-workers	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)
	Somewhat Agree	25 0% (2)	28 6% (2)	50 0% (1)	36 4% (4)
	Strongly Agree	75 0% (6)	42 9% (3)	50 0% (1)	45 5% (5)
rating average		3 75	3 14	3 50	3 18	3 36
I like the identity my job gives me	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	16 7% (1)	50 0% (1)	0 0% (0)
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	33 3% (2)	0 0% (0)	18 2% (2)
	Somewhat Agree	62 5% (5)	33 3% (2)	50 0% (1)	36 4% (4)
	Strongly Agree	37 5% (3)	16 7% (1)	0 0% (0)	45 5% (5)
rating average		3 38 (8)	2 50 (6)	2 00 (2)	3 27 (11)	3 04 (27)
My interactions with my co-workers are rewarding	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)
	Somewhat Disagree	12 5% (1)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	18 2% (2)
	Somewhat Agree	50 0% (4)	85 7% (6)	100 0% (2)	45 5% (5)
	Strongly Agree	37 5% (3)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	36 4% (4)
rating average		3 25 (8)	2.86 (7)	3 00 (2)	3 18 (11)	3 11 (28)

My manager helps me solve work-related problems	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)	
	Somewhat Agree	37 5% (3)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	27 3% (3)	
	Strongly Agree	62 5% (5)	57 1% (4)	100 0% (2)	63 6% (7)	
rating average		3 63 (8)	3 29 (7)	4 00 (2)	3 55 (11)	3 54 (28)
My manager encourages me to develop new skills	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	27 3% (3)	
	Somewhat Agree	62 5% (5)	14 3% (1)	50 0% (1)	18 2% (2)	
	Strongly Agree	37 5% (3)	57 1% (4)	50 0% (1)	54 5% (6)	
rating average		3 38 (8)	3 14 (7)	3 50 (2)	3 27 (11)	3 29 (28)
My manager keeps informed about how employees think and feel about things	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	27 3% (3)	
	Somewhat Agree	37 5% (3)	14 3% (1)	50 0% (1)	27 3% (3)	
	Strongly Agree	62 5% (5)	42 9% (3)	50 0% (1)	36 4% (4)	
rating average		3 63 (8)	2.86 (7)	3 50 (2)	2 91 (11)	3 14 (28)
answered question		8	7	2	11	28
				skipped question		0

4. Please indicate if you agree with the below statements by choosing one of the four options on the right hand side. Please tick the appropriate box for your answer.

		Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.				
		Management	**Legal & Compliance**	**Administration**	**Accounting**	**Response Totals**
My manager encourages employees to participate in important decisions.	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	12.5% (1)	42.9% (3)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	Somewhat Agree	50.0% (4)	14.3% (1)	50.0% (1)	63.6% (7)	
	Strongly Agree	37.5% (3)	28.6% (2)	50.0% (1)	27.3% (3)	
	rating average	3.25 (8)	2.57 (7)	3.50 (2)	3.18 (11)	3.07 (28)
My manager praises good work.	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	Somewhat Agree	25.0% (2)	42.9% (3)	50.0% (1)	45.5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	75.0% (6)	42.9% (3)	50.0% (1)	45.5% (5)	
	rating average	3.75 (8)	3.14 (7)	3.50 (2)	3.36 (11)	3.43 (28)
Employees are treated fairly by my manager.	Strongly Disagree	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	25.0% (2)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	45.5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	75.0% (6)	57.1% (4)	100.0% (2)	54.5% (6)	
	rating average	3.75	3.43	4.00	3.55	3.61

		(8)	(7)	(2)	(11)	(28)
My manager gives me autonomy in my work.	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	18.2% (2)	
	Somewhat Agree	25 0% (2)	28 6% (2)	50 0% (1)	36 4% (4)	
	Strongly Agree	75 0% (6)	42 9% (3)	50 0% (1)	45 5% (5)	
	rating average	3 75 (8)	3 14 (7)	3.50 (2)	3.27 (11)	3 89 (28)
I trust my manager.	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0 0% (0)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	37 5% (3)	0 0% (0)	50 0% (1)	36 4% (4)	
	Strongly Agree	62 5% (5)	71 4% (5)	50 0% (1)	54 5% (6)	
	rating average	3 63 (8)	3.29 (7)	3.50 (2)	3 36 (11)	3 43 (28)
I avoid working overtime whenever possible.	Strongly Disagree	37 5% (3)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	9 1% (1)	
	Somewhat Disagree	12 5% (1)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	37 5% (3)	28 6% (2)	100 0% (2)	18 2% (2)	
	Strongly Agree	12 5% (1)	28 6% (2)	0 0% (0)	72 7% (8)	
	rating average	2 25 (8)	2.57 (7)	3 00 (2)	3.55 (11)	2 89 (28)
I am afraid to express my opinions at work	Strongly Disagree	37 5% (3)	14.3% (1)	50 0% (1)	27 3% (3)	
	Somewhat Disagree	50 0% (4)	71 4% (5)	0 0% (0)	27 3% (3)	

	Somewhat Agree	12 5% (1)	14 3% (1)	50 0% (1)	45 5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	rating average	1 75 (8)	2.00 (7)	2 00 (2)	2 18 (11)	2 00 (28)
I don't 'rock the boat' with my co-workers.	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	10 0% (1)	
	Somewhat Disagree	37 5% (3)	42 9% (3)	0.0% (0)	30 0% (3)	
	Somewhat Agree	62 5% (5)	57 1% (4)	50 0% (1)	40.0% (4)	
	Strongly Agree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	50 0% (1)	20 0% (2)	
	rating average	2.63 (8)	2.57 (7)	3 50 (2)	2.70 (10)	2 70 (27)
I do what is expected of me by my coworkers	Strongly Disagree	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	9 1% ( )	
	Somewhat Disagree	12 5% (1)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	Somewhat Agree	62 5% (5)	71 4% (5)	100 0% (2)	54.5% (6)	
	Strongly Agree	25 0% (2)	14.3% (1)	0 0% (0)	36 4% (4)	
	rating average	3 13 (8)	3.00 (7)	3 00 (2)	3 18 (11)	3 11 (28)
I feel overwhelmed by the things going on at work.	Strongly Disagree	50 0% (4)	42.9% (3)	0 0% (0)	18 2% (2)	
	Somewhat Disagree	25 0% (2)	28 6% (2)	50.0% (1)	18 2% (2)	
	Somewhat Agree	12 5% (1)	14 3% (1)	50.0% (1)	63 6% (7)	
	Strongly Agree	12 5% (1)	14 3% (1)	0 0% (0)	0 0% (0)	
	rating average	1 88 (8)	2 00 (7)	2 50 (2)	2 45 (11)	2 18 (28)

I feel physically used up at the end of the workday	Strongly Disagree	25.0% (2)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	27.3% (3)	
	Somewhat Disagree	37.5% (3)	28.6% (2)	50.0% (1)	45.5% (5)	
	Somewhat Agree	25.0% (2)	28.6% (2)	50.0% (1)	27.3% (3)	
	Strongly Agree	12.5% (1)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	
	rating average	2.25 (8)	2.71 (7)	2.50 (2)	2.00 (11)	2.29 (28)
I worry about how others perceive me at work	Strongly Disagree	37.5% (3)	28.6% (2)	50.0% (1)	18.2% (2)	
	Somewhat Disagree	12.5% (1)	28.6% (2)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	Somewhat Agree	37.5% (3)	42.3% (3)	50.0% (1)	63.6% (7)	
	Strongly Agree	12.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	
	rating average	2.25 (8)	2.14 (7)	2.00 (2)	2.54 (11)	2.36 (28)
I am afraid my failings will be noticed by others	Strongly Disagree	37.5% (3)	14.3% (1)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	
	Somewhat Disagree	0.0% (0)	28.6% (2)	50.0% (1)	18.2% (2)	
	Somewhat Agree	50.0% (4)	57.1% (4)	50.0% (1)	45.5% (5)	
	Strongly Agree	12.5% (1)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	
	rating average	2.38 (8)	2.43 (7)	2.50 (2)	2.64 (11)	2.50 (28)
	answered question	8	7	2	11	28
	skipped question					0

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Part II:

5. What aspects of your role/ work itself would you consider important?

	Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.				
	Management	Legal & Compliance	Administration	Accounting	Response Count
	8 replies	6 replies	2 replies	11 replies	27
answered question	8	6	2	11	27
				skipped question	1

6. What aspects of your work environment do you consider important?

	Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.				
	Management	Legal & Compliance	Administration	Accounting	Response Count
	8 replies	6 replies	2 replies	11 replies	27
answered question	8	6	2	11	27
				skipped question	1

7. What are your recommendations for the company in general in relation to keeping their employees engaged?

	Please choose the appropriate department in which you belong.				
	Management	Legal & Compliance	Administration	Accounting	Response Count
	8 replies	6 replies	2 replies	11 replies	27
answered question	8	6	2	11	27
				skipped question	1

APPENDIX E

CORRELATION CALCULATIONS

1) Data provided based on overall scores for each factor

Overall Engagement Scores compared to the average score for each factor, namely work-role fit, co-worker relations, management relationship, co-worker norm adherence, resources, self-consciousness, meamngfulness, psychological safety and psychological availability

Overall Engagement Scores	Work Role Fit	Co-Worker Relations	Management Relationship	Co-Worker Norm Adherence	Resources	Self-Consciousness
3 496	3 25	3 6	3 59	3 13	2 6	2 68
3 26	2 53	3 14	3 1	3	2	2 7
2 72	2	3 37	3 6	3	2 5	2 75
3 05	3 13	3 22	3 3	3 18	2 4	2 36

Overall Engagement Scores	Meamngfulness	Psychological Safety	Psychological Availability
3 496	3 54	3 38	3 5
3 26	2 89	3 29	3 14
2 72	2 8	3	4
3 05	3 48	3 36	3 18

2) Microsoft Excel Formula

⌄   The equation for the correlation coefficient is

$$Correl(X\ Y) = \frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})(y - \bar{y})}{\sqrt{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2 \sum (y - \bar{y})^2}}$$

where x and y are the sample means AVERAGE(array 1) and AVERAGE(array 2)

3) Correlation Results

	Engagement Correlation
Meaningfulness	0 591588068
Psychological Safety	0 842407209
Psychological Availability	-0 575383157
Work Role Fit	0 755497888
Co-Worker Relations	0 332891619
Management Relations	-0 075627562
Co-Worker Norm Adherence	0 360767942
Resources	-0 075627562
Self Consciousness	-0 000884097

APPENDIX F

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW NOTES

Interviewee 1
Date 05/08/2012
Start Time 11 00 AM
End Time 12 15 PM
Department Legal & Compliance

Question 1 The results of the survey questionnaire seem to indicate that Management are the most engaged group in the company Why do you think this is?
Answer *I think that Management are more involved with our other offices and they are more aware of the developments within the Group We as Legal Account Managers and Accountants are more focused on one assignment or piece of work whereas managers are engaged in general and varied work For example, they are involved in monthly update calls with other offices, they know what is going on with the business It boils down to the nature of the work- their responsibilities cut across different areas of the business and so it's more interesting*

Question 1a So, would being more informed about the business increase the engagement levels for the rest of the staff?
Answer *Not really If so, we would have to do it from the start When it comes to the more established staff members, their patterns are hard to change and they are no longer interested in these initiatives They just feel like it's more work for them if they have to deal with other offices*

Question2 The results also indicate that the Administration team have the lowest engagement level within the organisation What do you think are the possible explanations for this result?
Answer *I think it's the nature of the work What they do is a support function to the rest of the organisation rather than a stand-alone role I would view admin work to be a means to an end It's something that you would do either at the beginning of your career when you're still deciding what to do or the end when you just do it for the money It's down to personal motivation- if you get a fixed income doing routine work, there's not much engagement involved*

Question 2a So how is the work of the Administration team different from the other departments?
Answer *The Accountants and us in Legal have made a conscious decision to follow a certain career path and out work here is in line with that You spend years preparing for a role that you want Administration is more like something that you fall into You might have a degree in something else like HR but it's not related to your line of work It's not really a career choice May be it's also that the Admin team don't get enough appreciation from the rest of us since there are a lot of things we rely on them on and they may not realise how important their role is They may feel that they're taken for granted!*

Question 3 There seems to be a weak relationship between the results of engagement levels and the following

    a) Positive Relationship with Manager
    b) The Availability of Personal Resources (whether they felt confident or overwhelmed about the things going on at work)

c) Psychological Availability (Their perceived confidence in their ability to deal with problems that come up at work/confidence in their ability to display the appropriate emotions at work)

What do you think might explain these results?

Answer *It boils down to the job itself and the fulfilment it gives you Having good relationships or capacity will not necessarily change your perception of the role if it's not something you want to do Engagement is really down to the job itself first, unless you are stuck for some external reasons*

Question 3a The Legal & Compliance Team had relatively moderate engagement levels but they scored lowest in terms of their "Relationship with the Manager" Why do you think this is?

Answer *Well, I think to some extent we are confused as to who our manager is We report of our supervisor, the head of the department, the GM and the MD? They have a lot of interest in the details of our role since they are also directors in the companies we deal with Even if you enjoy the actual work, the constant changes and different messages we are getting have made people want to leave*

Issues tend to bounce around because people either pass on the responsibility or are just confused since there are 4 managers with 4 different opinions There should be clear lines, if one decision is made, they should stick by it

I also think that we lost people due to the merger of the Legal and Cosec Departments As you can see, everyone who left went back to their original expertise in either field but that is not being acknowledged by management as a problem

Question 4 On the other hand, what do you think may be the reason for the strong relationship that was found between engagement and the following

 a) work/role fit

 b) Psychological safety (whether they feel they can express their opinions at work without fear of negative consequences)

 c) Meaningfulness of the work (whether the individual felt that their work is important to them or is personally meaningful to them)

Answer *I think those are quite straight forward When you're in a role that's a good fit and when you work with people that are not threatening, you tend to enjoy working in that place*

Question 5 You mentioned the high turnover in your department How do you think the changes in the general financial markets have impacted on engagement levels within the Company?

Answer *It really made a difference When the market was good, people had more options Then there was a lull during the recession when people needed to stay put They hogged work because they felt safer if they were indispensable*

Management's attitude also changed where they were telling people that they should be happy they have jobs during the recession and it was easier for them to be strict Finally when the markets picked up, people left

Question 5a What else do you think contributed to the high turnover?

Answer *Lack of career progression opportunities, unless you want to move to a different country The Legal and Cosec merger, management issues, attitude of management of "if you don't like it here, leave", policies that are inflexible such as being in trouble if you're 5 minutes late, longer hours than other companies These policies can make you feel small! It is not the way a professional environment should work We are being micro-managed by*

top management- it is quite restrictive These are push factors and people took on short-term contract roles just to get out of here

Question 6 What suggestions do you have to improve the engagement levels within the company?

Answer *Flexibility- leaving or arriving 5 minutes late should not cause a big drama!*

Trust and Autonomy- managers should stop picking at small things that people have done and focus on the results of their work The result is that nobody wants to take on responsibility for something because you know each and every little thing will be scrutinised and everyone has their own opinion of how things should have been done even if the overall results was positive with the client

Clearer delineation of reporting lines- decisions shouldn't contradict each other

Interviewee 2
Date 13/08/2012
Start Time 4 00 PM
End Time 4 45 PM
Department Management

Question 1 The results of the survey questionnaire seem to indicate that Management are the most engaged group in the company Does this surprise you? What do you think explains this result?

Answer *No, it doesn't surprise me I think the engagement levels of our employees also varies according to the time that they joined the company I was hired, the team was behind in all their client work The MD explained this to me and I got hooked in straight away This was my responsibility and I needed to fix it This really motivated me to take care of the issues within the team straight away and make changes This makes you feel like you are an asset, that you are of high value to the company and that you can effect change The expectations were very clear from the start The incentive was proving ourselves in a professional [Accounting] and management capacity*

I think those who were hired later on when things were going more smoothly and with less challenge, may not be as engaged They could see it now as a job rather than a challenge

Question 2 The results also indicate that the Administration team have the lowest engagement level within the organisation What do you think are the possible explanations for this result?

Answer *This is surprising to me since they are very helpful But come to think of it, their role hasn't really changed They are doing the same thing every day They could be bored with the work as it's quite repetitive and routine*

I think we should really let the Admin team know their contribution to the company That might make a difference They may need more recognition from the other teams and us managers

Question 3 There seems to be a very weak relationship between engagement and the following

   a) **Positive Relationship with Manager**
   b) **The Availability of Personal Resources (whether they felt confident or overwhelmed about the things going on at work)**
c) **Psychological Availability (Their perceived confidence in their ability to deal with problems that come up at work/confidence in their ability to display the appropriate emotions at work)**
What do you think might explain these results?

Answer *I can speak about my own department where our General Manager joins us for our weekly team meetings Now he is also chairing and leading those meetings rather than allowing the head of the department to do so I think the role of senior managers should be more strategic in nature and they should leave the operational tasks to us as middle managers How can the manager engage their team if there is always an influence from Top Management, especially in these weekly meeting forums? So I think the department heads should take back these meetings and engage their staff more*

I think those that displayed high engagement levels due to the importance of their roles in the company On the other hand, I think we are over-managed

Question 4 On the other hand, what do you think may be the reason for the strong relationship that was found between engagement and the following

a) work/role fit

b) Psychological safety (whether they feel they can express their opinions at work without fear of negative consequences)

c) Meaningfulness of the work (whether the individual felt that their work is important to them or is personally meaningful to them)

Answer *It makes sense The accountants, for example, work on an end-to-end portfolio of clients They know the process inside-out They are being judged based on their output and I think that really engages people They feel responsible and they feel their work is important It makes them think this piece is mine*

Question 5 How do you think the changes in the general financial markets have impacted on engagement levels within the Company?

Answer *This made a significant impact Due to low revenue levels after 2009, the company had a salary freeze and hiring freeze so the business was not growing This impacted on the opportunities we could provide to employees in terms of growth and promotions Naturally, people will look for opportunities elsewhere When you don't have any career progression opportunities, you feel stuck in your role*

The recognition capability of the company is still limited and people have to think about their options We have people passing exams, getting distinctions, completing Masters programmes but we don't have the capacity to get them to the next stage On the other hand, not everyone wants to move, and when people are comfortable in their positions, they stay there but may not be highly engaged

Question 6 What suggestions do you have to improve the engagement levels within the company?

Answer *I think some practical recommendations would be to get the supervisors and more senior staff to step up and take on more responsibility in order to keep them engaged We must hold them accountable with robust performance appraisals We also need to ensure we are hiring the right people and listen to people*

The company is flexible in terms of people's immediate needs For example, we never deny requests for holidays, even last minute ones are approved However, in terms of policies, we may be a bit rigid A lot of flexibility is required from Management and staff but some people may feel that this is not being reciprocated by the company Smaller issues like flexible working hours are not granted The impact is that I, as a manager, finish people's work in the evening since they feel that they don't need to stay longer We do enough but with a sense of rigidity and formality I think we need to benchmark flexible arrangements within our industry

The Company follows working hours of 9AM to 6PM compared to the norm within the industry of 9AM to 5PM or 5 30PM We have lean periods and quite periods I think we should have different flexibility arrangements according to those periods A fair and compassionate approach is always good

Interviewee 3
Date 14/08/2012
Start Time 2 30 PM
End Time 3 00 PM
Department Administration

Question 1 The results of the survey questionnaire seem to indicate that Management are the most engaged group in the company Does this surprise you? What do you think explains this result?
Answer *I think that's normal and it should be the case They are the ones that have to divide the work across the teams They have more responsibility so they have to be more engaged*
Question 2 The results also indicate that the Administration team have the lowest engagement level within the organisation What do you think are the possible explanations for this result?
Answer *I'm not surprised We do the work that most people don't really want to do because it's too tedious We are given work that other teams don't have time for or they have more important things to focus on Our work is really based on routine like filing These things take time but they are not necessarily exciting or fulfilling work*
On the other hand, we are able to suggest how things can be improve That is a good thing and it makes things easier I think the engagement really depends on the nature of the role
Question 3 There seems to be a very weak relationship between engagement and the following
　　　a) Positive Relationship with Manager
　　　b) The Availability of Personal Resources (whether they felt confident or overwhelmed about the things going on at work)
c) Psychological Availability (Their perceived confidence in their ability to deal with problems that come up at work/confidence in their ability to display the appropriate emotions at work)
What do you think might explain these results?
Answer *I think in other departments like the Legal team, they are not sure who their manager really is That may be a contributing factor The head of the department doesn't really have much power because she gets over-stepped by the GM or the MD There isn't much space for her to manage*
I think that although engagement has to do with the nature of your work, you would also be affected once the relationship with management becomes toxic I think there is a tipping point of when the nature of you relationship with your manager will really affect you If the relationship is ok, even if it's not great, you can still be engaged
Question 4 On the other hand, what do you think may be the reason for the strong relationship that was found between engagement and the following
　　　a) work/role fit
　　　b) Psychological safety (whether they feel they can express their opinions at work without fear of negative consequences)
　　　c) Meaningfulness of the work (whether the individual felt that their work is important to them or is personally meaningful to them)
Answer *That makes sense I wouldn't want to do this job for the rest of my life The other departments have roles that coincide with their career paths I think in Admin, it's*

just the nature of the work I don't really think you could make it that much more engaging

Question 5 How do you think the changes in the general financial markets have impacted on engagement levels within the Company?

Answer *I think during the recession, people stayed because it was the more secure option They were not necessarily engaged So when opportunities came up again in the economy, you say loads of people leave*

Question 6 What suggestions do you have to improve the engagement levels within the company?

Answer *I think top management should give us more space and more responsibility even to the other managers Learning and growth opportunities are always good We follow longer hours than other companies We should also be rewarded- if not financially then with other things like flexibility*

APPENDIX G

DEFINITION OF RELEVANT TERMS

Employee Engagement- "how individuals employ themselves in the performance of their job" In engagement, people employ and express themselves, cognitively, emotionally and physically during role performances" (Khan, 1990)

Psychological Meaningfulness - "the value of a work goal or purpose, judged in relation to an individual's own ideas or standards" (May et al, 2004)

Psychological Safety- "the feeling of being able to show and employ one's self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status, or career" (Khan, 1990, p 708)

Psychological Availability- the individual's perception of the availability of his own physical, emotional and cognitive resources in order to engage at work "In essence, it assesses the readiness, or confidence, of a person to engage in his/her work role given that individuals engage in many other life activities" (May et al, 2004, p 17-18)

Self-Consciousness- an individual's preoccupation about how others perceive or judge them (May et al, 2004) at work

Work-Role Fit- the individual's perception of the 'fit' between their self-concept and their jobs

Resources- the individual's perception of whether they possess the necessary resources such to meet the physical, emotional and cognitive demands of work

Co-Worker Relation- the individual's perception of their relationship with their co-workers and whether this relationship was deemed to be rewarding The items asked whether the employee felt they were listened to, whether they respected each other at work and whether they trusted their co-workers

Co-Worker Norm Adherence- whether the employee felt that they followed what is expected from them by their co-workers

Supervisor/Management Relations- the employees' perceived quality and of their relationship with their manager

-END-