

**A Study Exploring the Influence of Organisational
Communications on Employee Engagement within the Context
of a Medium Sized IT Organisation in Ireland**

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Abstract

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The purpose of this research was to explore the influence of organisational communications on employee engagement levels in a medium sized IT organisation in Ireland. The objectives of the study were to identify the current employee engagement level within the organisation, to establish employee's perceptions of communication within the organisation and to establish whether employee's with positive perceptions of organisational communication have high engagement levels. The study also explored whether these two variables differ between different employee categories.

The data for the study was collected using quantitative methods in the form of an internet-mediated questionnaire which also generated several items of qualitative data. This was administered to all employees in the organisation.

The research found that there is a significant link between organisational communication and employee engagement. In particular, those with higher perceptions of communication in the organisation are also likely to be highly engaged. This is particularly evident when analysing the differences between staff grade and found that those at senior management grade had much more positive perceptions of communication and higher engagement levels than those at staff grade. The research also concluded that there are some areas in relation to communication which need to be addressed in the hope that engagement levels would be impacted positively. With the quantitative and qualitative data gathered from the questionnaire and the related literature review, a list of recommendations specific to the organisation have been compiled in the hope that, if implemented, engagement levels will be impacted positively.

Declaration

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

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Building on the foundations of early concepts such as job satisfaction and commitment, the concept of employee engagement emerged (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Although employee engagement is very much related to and incorporates these concepts, it is a much broader concept (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). An engaged employee can be described as one who has a positive attitude towards their organisation and puts in effort, which is beyond the required minimum, to get the job done and to improve performance for the overall benefit of the organisation (Robinson, Perryman & Hayday, 2004; Devi, 2009).

High employee engagement levels reap many benefits for organisations. Research by Towers Perrin has shown that organisations with higher levels of engagement than their competitors outperform them in relation to both performance and profitability (Cook, 2008). In addition to this, increased engagement levels also benefit the individual employee as well as the employer. Engaged employees are found to have a higher sense of well-being than their less engaged counterparts (CIPD, 2009). Therefore, it would seem, it is in every organisations' interests to know and understand the drivers of employee engagement (Devi, 2009).

Many organisations, who do not adequately understand what drives engagement, spend time and money attempting to increase the engagement levels of their workforce without seeing any results (Watson Wyatt, 2006) despite the fact that many of the solutions to improve engagement levels are low-tech and inexpensive (Crush, 2013). Particularly, in the current economic climate it can be necessary for organisations to engage their employees with low expense methods rather than through monetary incentives.

Academics, industry bodies and professional services companies alike have studied the link between effective internal organisational communication and engagement. From the literature, two key aspects of communication stand out as drivers of engagement.

Firstly is communication from senior management. Watson Wyatt (2006) suggest that the regularity of communication from senior management is an important driver of employee engagement. From their 2006/2007, they found that highly engaged employees receive communication from senior management much more regularly than employees with low engagement (Watson Wyatt, 2006). MacLeod & Clarke (2009) also single out senior management having a clear vision and most importantly expressing this clearly to their staff as an explanatory factor of highly engaged employees. Additionally, the results from Mercer's 2002 People at Work Survey reaffirm this belief as they found that employee satisfaction rose by 32% when management communicated the vision and future of the organisation clearly compared to when they did not.

Secondly is an effective two-way communication relationship between staff and management which allows management to give feedback and appraisals to employees and most importantly allows employees to feel comfortable to voice their opinions and give feedback on organisational changes or decisions. CIPD research (2006a) has found, what Woodruffe (2006) considers to be the most important driver of engagement, that employees having the opportunity to feed their views and opinions upwards in their organisation is one of the most important drivers of engagement. MacLeod and Clarke (2009) also consider employee voice to be one of four key enablers of engagement, specifically; employees feeding their opinions upward in their organisation and management listening to their concerns. It is also vital that these opinions are valued and listened to. It is not enough that employees are just allowed to give their opinions.

1.2 Title/Research Issue

Title: 'Exploring the influence of organisational communications on employee engagement levels within the context of a private sector IT organisation in Ireland.

1.3 Aims of the Research

This research aims to explore the significance of the relationship between communication and engagement. Are high levels of perceived organisational communication a good indicator that engagement levels may also be high? And vice versa? The research will also aim to determine whether perceptions of organisational communication and employee engagement levels differ between different employee categories, for example does senior management score higher on both scales than staff.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are:

- To identify the current employee engagement level in organisation X.
- To establish employee's perceptions of communication in organisation X.
- To determine whether engagement levels differ between employee categories.
- To determine whether perceptions of organisational communication differ between employee categories.
- To establish whether employee's with positive perceptions of organisational communication have high engagement levels

1.5 Research Methodology

The process of the research will be quantitative in the form of a questionnaire which will collect quantitative as well as some qualitative data. This questionnaire was administered to organisation X, a medium sized private sector IT organisation and the context of the study.

1.6 Limitations

The research is concerned with the influence of organisational communication on employee engagement. The literature indicates that by using key drivers to enhance engagement, organisational performance and business outcomes may also be enhanced. However, this research will not investigate the impact of engagement on the organisational performance of organisation X. In addition to this, this research has been carried out in the context of one medium sized private sector IT organisation and therefore it may not be possible to generalise the results to other organisations or the industry.

1.7 Potential Significance

This research will aim to explore the influence of organisational communication on employee engagement levels and therefore it is hoped that this study will add to the body of knowledge available on communication as a driver of employee engagement.

1.8 Structure of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 introduced the area of the research. The aim and research objectives have been outlined as well as a brief description of the research methodology which will be used to attempt to achieve the research objectives.

Chapter 2 outlines the concept of the research. It does so by first discussing the constructs of employee engagement and organisational communication separately. It explains employee engagement by defining it, the benefits for organisations who work to manage and enhance it and establishing how to best measure it. It defines organisational communication by defining what communication actually is, and outlining the different types of communication which take place in organisations; the channels used, formal vertical and horizontal communication and informal communication. Organisational communication is then introduced as one of the key

drivers of engagement. This will be established by drawing on the relevant research and literature which explain how different elements of communication can drive engagement.

Chapter 3 introduces the research methodology for the study. It will discuss the methodological framework used for the research firstly outlining the objectives of the study. The chosen research approach, strategy, research methods for both the collection and analysis of data will be outlined and justifications will be given for the choice. The design and administration of the research instrument will be discussed in length. The researcher will give attention to ethical considerations and ensuring the reliability and validity of the research. This chapter will also include an outline of the context for the study, organisation X.

Chapter 4 presents the analysis of the data and findings drawn from this. It will do so by using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The qualitative data gathered from the questionnaire will also be discussed. This chapter also presents the discussion of results with a focus on achieving the research objectives identified in chapter 3.1. The analysis has been structured around the research objectives.

Chapter 5 will draw conclusions from the main findings of the data. Recommendations will be made which may positively impact engagement in the organisation.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the concept of the research. It does so by first discussing the constructs of employee engagement and organisational communication separately. It explains employee engagement by defining it, the benefits for organisations who work to manage and enhance it and establishing how to best measure it. It defines organisational communication by defining what communication actually is, and outlining the different types of communication which take place in organisations; the channels used, formal vertical and horizontal communication as well as informal communication. Organisational communication is then introduced as one of the key drivers of engagement. This will be established by drawing the relevant research and literature which explain how different elements of communication can drive engagement.

2.2 The Concept of Employee Engagement

2.2.1 Defining Employee Engagement

Although the term ‘employee engagement’ may sound relatively new, it has existed for a long time as a core management practice (Devi, 2009). More than 20 years ago, Kahn (1990) authored some of the earliest work on engagement by defining it as “*the harnessing of organisation members’ selves to their work roles*” (Kahn, 1990: 694) however, an important part of this was that they did so without sacrificing one for the other. He believed that this involved people expressing themselves in three different ways during role ‘performances’; physically, emotionally and cognitively (Kahn, 1990). In order to clarify the meaning of his definition, Kahn (1990) also described what he thought to be disengagement as; an employee withdrawing and defending themselves physically, cognitively or emotionally.

Since then, there has been debate over how employee engagement should be defined, what drives it and how it should be measured (Stevens, 2013). Currently, there is no single generally accepted definition (Markos & Sridevi, 2010) and despite its importance for organisations there is occasionally substantial confusion regarding the meaning (Welch, 2011). However, for the purpose of this research, Robinson, Perryman and Hayday's (2004) definition of employee engagement will be used. They define that employee engagement is "*a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organisation*" (Robinson, Perryman, & Hayday, 2004: ix). They also propose that an organisation has to work at developing engagement which requires a reciprocal and effective two-way working relationship between employer and employee. Therefore, the responsibility of ensuring an engaged staff does not lie with just one party (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Watson Wyatt (2006) explain engagement further by saying that engaged employees are proud to work for their organisation, motivated to help them be a success and committed to and satisfied with the organisation. However, although commitment is a good indication of engagement, it is not enough. They must understand the organisations goals, what must be done to achieve those goals and how they themselves contribute in achieving the goals (Watson Wyatt, 2006).

In recent years, employee engagement has become increasingly important for organisations wanting to remain competitive in the current climate. Employers want engaged employees as they believe they will go that extra mile for the organisation resulting in improved business performance (IBEC, 2012.)

Unfortunately, however, recent survey results from the CIPD (2013) found that just 37 per cent of employees say that they are actively engaged in their roles at work; this figure drops lower to 33 per cent in the public sector. Attridge (2009: 384) argues that low employee engagement rates have been found from many surveys conducted over the past ten years which represent a "*global crisis in productivity and worker well-being*". Crush (2013) suggests that, surprisingly, a lot of the solutions to end this crisis

are low-tech and inexpensive – increased transparency and more frequent communication.

2.2.2 Measuring Engagement

Measuring a concept such as engagement can be difficult, as it involves assessing complex feelings and emotions (Robinson, et al., 2004). However, Armstrong (2012) believes that interest in the area of engagement has been stimulated by the possibility to measure levels with engagement questionnaires and scales (Armstrong, 2012). Engagement surveys provide the information needed to develop and implement organisational engagement strategies using the ‘triple-A’ approach: analysis, assessment and action (Armstrong, 2012: 175). Similarly, Robinson et al., (2004) suggest that attitude surveys are a useful instrument to collect and analyse employee opinions.

Many leading international professional services companies and research organisations have developed their own questionnaires and survey tools to measure engagement in organisations including Mercer, Gallup, Towers Watson, Aon Hewitt and the Institute for Employment Studies as well as the HR and development professional Body, the CIPD. Gallup is one of the most prominent and influential organisations in this area; they developed the 12 item level worker engagement index, based on extensive research, which gives a valuable summary of what engagement looks like and feels like (Attridge, 2009; CIPD, 2009). The engagement index includes items such as ‘I know what is expected of me at work’ and ‘At work, my opinions seem to count’ (Gallup, 2013).

The Institute for Employment Studies (Robinson, et al., 2004) developed a questionnaire comprised of twelve engagement statements for a particular study (these statements were developed with reference to several reliable and validated questionnaires for employers in different sectors from survey providers and researchers) which was administered to 14 organisations in the UK’s health service. Interestingly the study found that job groups, staff grades and working hours can make a difference to

engagement levels. Generally managers and professionals have higher engagement levels than employees in supporting roles (Robinson, et al., 2004). In addition to this, it was also found that full-time workers are significantly more engaged than their part-time colleagues. This suggests that employers need to ensure that employees who are not in the workplace on a full time basis, are communicated with effectively and are managed effectively allowing them to develop in their role (Robinson, et al., 2004).

The CIPD have also been measuring employee attitude and engagement through surveys for almost 20 years. David Guest and Neil Conway, experts in the fields of HR and organisational psychology (Guest & Conway, 2004) have analysed the CIPD's surveys and concluded that these surveys consistently focused on a set of key areas, including:

- Satisfaction
- Motivation
- Fairness
- Trust
- Work Life balance
- Loyalty
- Commitment.

In this dissertation, the researcher will use Guest and Conway's key areas to categorise items to measure engagement levels. These items will be replicated from valid and reliable questionnaires from the CIPD and Gallup, as previously mentioned, and will be used to measure employee engagement levels in a medium sized private sector IT organisation later in the current dissertation.

Beslin and Reddin (2004) also emphasise the importance of measuring trust within an organisation in employee engagement surveys; the belief that a person has your best interest at heart. This will give an idea of how trustworthy employees perceive their line managers and senior managers to be. Trust can be difficult to develop and maintain in times of economic uncertainty as it is often not possible for senior management to

communicate all information to employees. However, employee's perceptions of their leaders trustworthiness can affect their ability to engage; as their leader cannot lead them effectively and engage them if they do not trust them (Beslin & Reddin, 2004).

2.2.3 Benefits of Employee Engagement

Many organisations still fail to measure their employees' engagement levels (Attridge, 2009). However, of those that do measure and manage engagement, there are significant benefits (CIPD, 2009).

Companies choose to invest in their employees' engagement because it is significantly linked with important business outcomes (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). Engagement can, in fact, affect productivity directly which in turn will affect profitability (Stevens, 2013). Devi (2009) argues that as engagement levels of employees increase, so does their commitment to their organisation making them less likely to leave and more enthusiastic with meeting customer's needs. Gallup (Cook, 2008) research has solidified this argument by showing that employees with high engagement levels are more customer focused, less likely to leave than those with low engagement levels which can lead to an increase in individual profitability.

According to research by Towers Perrin, organisations with higher levels of employee engagement than their competitors outperform them with regard to performance and profitability by 17 per cent (Cook, 2008). The research concluded that there is a significant relationship between employee engagement and financial performance (Cook, 2008). In addition to this, studies at Visa Europe (CIPD, 2009) demonstrated that their customer satisfaction levels increased along with employee engagement levels over a period of five years. Watson Wyatt (2006) have also found that engagement is a leading indicator of business performance. However, the challenge for organisations is determining how to enhance engagement in order to achieve this outcome. Many organisations, who do not adequately understand what drives engagement, spend time

and money in an effort to enhance engagement without it happening (Watson Wyatt, 2006).

As well as productivity for the business, engagement can be seen to provide some benefits for individual employees. CIPD (2006) research has shown that engaged employees experience more positive emotions towards their work, are more likely to see their work as meaningful and experience higher job satisfaction. In addition to this, engaged employees are less likely to be sick and have a higher sense of well-being than their less engaged counterparts (CIPD, 2009). For example, on average engaged employees in the UK take 3.5 sick days less than their disengaged counterparts (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009).

This evidence suggests that increased engagement levels benefit both the employer and the individual employee.

2.3 Understanding Organisational Communication

2.3.1 Defining organisational communication

Effective communication is always important, especially in the current economic climate. With employees and stakeholders expecting increasing transparency of organisations, it is extremely important that organisations prioritise internal communications as much as they do external (CIPD, 2010b).

Before we explore the idea of communication being a key driver of employee engagement, we must understand what exactly it means in the context of this research. There is no single definition of communication. However, for the purpose of this research communication will be defined as “a process for passing information between two or more individuals. It consists of both intention and means. It is the ability of one person to make good contact with another and to make him- or herself understood” (Turner, 2003: 41). In this study, organisational communication will refer to internal rather than external communication. For the communication to be effective, it is

important that it is understood accurately. Rouse and Rouse (2005) claim that effective communication takes place when information is understood accurately by the receiver as was intended by the sender.

Effective internal communication is important for organisations as; trust is generated as the organisation takes time to explain to employees what they are doing and why. Commitment of employees can also be improved once they know what the organisation is trying to achieve and how it benefits them (Armstrong, 2012).

2.3.2 Communication Channels

Although this definition gives a good understanding, discussing the key elements of communication will help us understand it in greater detail.

In order for the message that is communicated to be effective and useful, the sender should endeavour that it is accurate, timely, complete and relevant (Rouse & Rouse, 2005). It is, after all, possible for information that is meaningful to be useless.

The communication channel which is chosen can have a large impact on the message (Turner, 2003). Turner (2003) argues that the channel of communication can affect how the message is decoded and interpreted.

To communicate with employees, there are various channels which can be used:

- *Face-to-Face*

For many organisations, this is a common method and one which can give the message more credibility due to the personal approach (Turner, 2003). However, the quality and accuracy of the information depend on a manager's skill and ability in delivering the information. Therefore, information can sometimes become distorted (Armstrong, 2012). Larkin and Larkin (1996) believe that this is the best way to communicate any major organisational change rather than in a company publication or large meetings with staff.

- *Meetings and Team Briefings*

Meetings and team briefings can overcome the limited range for communication that individual face-to-face communication can achieve. These types of meetings can be effective when enthusiasm for them comes from the top of the hierarchy and once they are organised well with prior subjects, agendas and durations decided upon (Armstrong, 2012). However, Larkin and Larkin (1996) state that because meetings are a channel that use face-to-face communication, many managers think that they are effective in communicating organisational changes. *“Face-to-face communication does not and should not mean large meetings when one has to communicate with frontline employees”* (Larkin & Larkin, 1996: 100).

- *Intranet and E-mail*

The internet has changed communication in society and is increasingly becoming the basic form of communication for many. It is also a very powerful tool in corporate communication (Turner, 2003). There are many advantages to internet based communication including its immediacy, direct access and cost-effectiveness. Intranet based communications within organisations also allow for a protected channel that be monitored (Turner, 2003).

- *Corporate Magazines and Newsletters*

These publications may include information about individual employees, policies and business information such as sales turnover and information on staff training programmes (Turner, 2003). Magazines or in house journals are good ways to keep employees informed about the organisation’s activities. Newsletters can be distributed more often than magazines and can focus more so on the concerns of employees (Armstrong, 2012).

There is no single best channel of communication as each channel achieves a different objective. Channels such as intranets and newsletters inform of important news and

reinforce information (CIPD, 2010b). However, they do not encourage or drive behavioural outcomes from an organisational strategy (CIPD, 2010b). A mix of channels, for example regular one-to-one meetings or team meetings which encourage debate, are effective mechanisms for driving behavioural change as they attempt to build engagement (CIPD, 2010b).

Martin, Reddington and Kneafsey (2007) highlight that organisations need to take advantage of the opportunities which the rise in technology are presenting. Technology is an effective facilitator of communication and people management, especially in a large organisation (CIPD, 2010b). It offers an effective and efficient method of two-way communication that many other channels cannot compete with (Martin, et al., 2007). The rise of generation X into the workforce means that if organisations are unwilling to adopt new technologies, they may eventually find that they have no other choice (Martin, et al., 2007). At the same time, however face-to-face communications, whether it be a one-to-one meeting, team meeting or general meeting, can offer benefits which technology cannot. Actually talking to someone demonstrates the commitment of the organisation to its' employees (Holwerda, 2007).

2.3.3 Vertical and Horizontal Communications

All organisations have both vertical and horizontal forms of communication. "Vertical communication refers to a communication that follows the chain of command of a bureaucratic organisation" (Rouse & Rouse, 2005: 9). Vertical communication can move both downwards through the hierarchy and of course move upwards (Rouse & Rouse, 2005). With regard to downward communication, managers aim to notify and update their employees directly so that they are more likely to accept change whether it is organisational goals, tasks or training. How they do this varies and managers may use formal, informal, written or face-to-face methods of communication (Leopold, 2002). Upward communication, on the other hand, is an area in most organisations that is "at best mediocre and at worst non-existent" (Turner, 2003: 137). It refers to employees

contribution of feedback and ideas, allowing them to feed their concerns and questions upward to management (Rouse & Rouse, 2005; Turner, 2003).

Horizontal communication refers to communication with fellow colleagues whose position within the organisation is at the same staff grade or hierarchical level (Rouse & Rouse, 2005). This is likely to be the most prominent form of communication especially when organisations are dealing with inter-organisational relationships (Rouse & Rouse, 2005).

2.3.4 Informal Communication

In addition to these formal methods of communication, we must give consideration to informal methods of communication as large amounts of information exchange in organisations are at an informal level (Turner, 2003). These are types of communication which do not adhere to the organisational hierarchy and occur on a more personal level (Johnson, Atkin & Johnson, 1994). It can be considered, that each organisation unofficially has an 'informal organisational structure' (Rouse & Rouse, 2005: 5). These can consist of groups of colleagues or networks of friends or acquaintances. This informal organisation structure in turn has an 'informal communication network' (Rouse & Rouse, 2005: 5) comprising of the grapevine and informal groups. Communications with informal groups simply occur when a group of employees who share interests meet outside of the workplace and may discuss what is happening in the organisation (Rouse & Rouse, 2005). However, the main informal communication network is the grapevine. Grapevine communication occurs when people exchange information outside of the formal communication channels used by the organisation. Managers have little control over this but they can gain slight control by learning the key people within a grapevine chain and ensuring that they receive truthful facts (Rouse & Rouse, 2005).

Although informal communication networks can result in distortion of information and spread rumours, they can also at times be very accurate sources of information (Rouse

& Rouse, 2005). They can spread information very quickly and therefore inform a large number of people. Communication through the grapevine usually increases in organisation in times of uncertainty (Rouse & Rouse, 2005).

2.3.5 What should be communicated?

So in what way are these channels and forms of communication used in an organisational context? What types of employee communication happen within organisations?

With regard to downward communication, managers need to communicate to employees the objectives, strategies, policies and procedures of the organisation as well as their tasks, learning and development opportunities, and any proposed changes to working conditions (Armstrong, 2012). Armstrong (2012) suggests that in order to ensure effective communication in the organisation, when changes are made, managers must explain why they have been made and how they will affect staff members. Employees also need to be able to communicate upwards their feedback to proposed changes (Armstrong, 2012).

According to Turner (2003: 133), there are two sides to employee communication. On one hand, and on which most organisations focus, is the question of ‘what does the organisation want the *employees* to know?’. However, a key question which is commonly forgotten is ‘what do *employees* want to know?’. Getting a good equal balance of both requires effort and practice (Turner, 2003). Effective communication has become a part of the engagement process which is deemed necessary for success; however organisations continue to struggle with this challenge (Turner, 2003). And in recent times, given the economic climate and questions of trust faced by organisations, organisations are being pressurised by employees and customers to be clear and precise on what they stand for more than ever (CIPD, 2010b). Recent results from a CIPD (2010b) report showed that this is still very much a challenge for organisations. Regarding employee perceptions of communication, only half of participants felt fairly or fully informed about what was happening in their organisation and just 55 per cent felt that they can usually or always believe information which they receive about their

organisation (CIPD, 2010b). And according to Towers Perrin, just 31 per cent of employees feel that their senior managers try to communicate openly and honestly (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009). The need for effective communication is apparent.

2.4 Driving Employee Engagement with Communication

2.4.1 Communication and Business Performance

Yates (2006) reports that Watson Wyatt's 2003 research found that highly effective internal communication plays a crucial role in driving business success. According to the research, organisations who decide to invest in improving the effectiveness of their internal communication will in time reap the benefits including superior financial results, higher market premiums and greater organisational stability (Yates, 2006). This has become even more evident as globalisation increases the instability of the markets in which today's organisations' operate (Holwerda, 2007). In order to address these changes in the market, organisations must be able to function effectively internally with staff willing to go beyond what is required in their role so that the organisation can attempt to gain competitive advantage (Holwerda, 2007). Effective communication and trust are needed in the organisation for this to work (Holwerda, 2007; Barker & Camarata, 1998). Therefore, the internal communication of an organisation and the degree to which it is effective can affect the process of an organisation attempting to engage their employees as well as the engagement results (Holwerda, 2007).

Turner (2003) suggests that effective organisational communications are essential in enhancing employee engagement and the engaged workforce can lead to an organisations competitive advantage over their competitors. Watson Wyatt, as presented in Yates (2006), reaffirm this idea as when comparing companies with low communication effectiveness and high communication effectiveness, the latter were more than 4.5 times more likely to also have employees who were highly engaged. This is what was found to lead to their higher financial results (Yates, 2006).

2.4.2 Communication and Engagement

The role of communication as a driver of engagement and job satisfaction has been highlighted in research by academics and industry practitioners alike. More than 30 years ago, Downs and Hazen (1977) conducted a study to explore the relationship between communication and job satisfaction. Downs and Hazen (1977) developed and administered a questionnaire to several organisations. Some of their findings concluded that the most important dimensions of communication which interact with job satisfaction are; personal feedback, relationships with supervisors and the communication climate (Downs & Hazen, 1977). Kahn (1990) whose theory of engagement was outlined in chapter 2.2.1 also identified communication as a factor associated with employee engagement.

Since then, research has been conducted and literature written on communication as a driver of engagement and how it may improve engagement levels. Interestingly, the literature suggests that some of the most important elements of communication which impact on engagement are relationships with managers, and how they express the vision of the organisation to their employees (Welch, 2011; MacLeod & Clarke, 2009; Attridge, 2009; Robinson, et al., 2004); receiving feedback and appraisals on job performance (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009) and; employees having the opportunity for their opinions to be heard (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009; CIPD, 2006a; Robinson, et al., 2004) These elements do not differ drastically from Downs and Hazen's (1977) conclusions.

2.4.3 Important Communication Drivers of Engagement

Welch and Jackson (2007) have conceptualised senior management communication, in particular, as 'internal corporate communication'. Welch and Jackson (2007) explain that internal corporate communication is one of four dimensions of internal communication, the other three being; internal team communication, internal line manager communication and internal project peer communication. The understanding of these four internal communication dimensions is that communication between an

organisations' management and employees should promote commitment, a sense of employees belonging to the organisation and an understanding of the organisations aims and strategic objectives (Welch & Jackson, 2007). However, Watson Wyatt (2006) suggest that senior management communication may be a more important driver of engagement than others. They suggest that many organisations overlook the role of senior management in enhancing engagement and see the supervisor as one of the most important drivers of engagement. However, "*senior leadership and the frequency with which senior managers communicate with employees are far more important drivers of engagement*" (Watson Wyatt, 2006: 2). Their 2006/2007 research, which surveyed 12,204 full time workers in the US, also found that employees who are highly engaged receive communication from their supervisors and senior management much more regularly than employees who have low engagement scores (Watson Wyatt, 2006).

How exactly does senior management communication have this effect on engagement? Mercer's 2002 People at Work Survey, which was administered to more than 2,500 employees in the United States, gives some interesting insights (Attridge, 2009). The results were extremely interesting. It found that effective communication by management to employees regarding an organisation's strategy was directly related to employee satisfaction and commitment levels. More specifically, when management did not communicate the vision and future of the organisation clearly, 39 per cent of employees were dissatisfied with the organisation and 32 per cent of employees did not have a strong sense of commitment to the organisation. While, when management communicated the vision and future of the organisation clearly, a significantly lower 7 per cent of employees were dissatisfied with the organisation and another significantly lower figure of 6 per cent did not have a strong sense of commitment to the organisation (Attridge, 2009). These findings suggest that increased effectiveness of communication from management is associated with increased employee engagement levels (Attridge, 2009). Dr Mary Welch (2011), an expert in internal communication, believes that this positively impacts engagement as when communication is practiced effectively employees understand the values and vision of an organisation, therefore they are engaged them with the organisation's goals.

Ruck and Trainor (2011), conducted research entitled ‘communicating for engagement’ for the Chartered Institute of Public Relations (the methodology for which was an online questionnaire administered to 356 internal communications practitioners). Their findings reported that only a quarter of their respondents believed that line managers have a positive attitude towards internal communication. 81% of the respondents also stressed that they want to focus a lot more on employee feedback and line manager communication (Ruck & Trainor, 2011). This differs slightly from Watson Wyatt’s (2006) finding that senior leadership communication is more of an engagement driver than line management communication. However, Ruck and Trainor (2011) concluded that employee engagement is not likely to improve in organisations until senior management consider internal communication more strongly. Then this allows line managers to understand the importance of communication, being supported by senior management as communicators, closing a large gap in the employee engagement process. VSP, a large provider of eye care benefits, who introduced a number of ‘*satisfaction-enhancing employee programmes*’, addressed manager-employee communications as part of the programmes (Leuchars, Harrington & Erickson, 2003). Efforts to improve employee-manager communications included an upward evaluation project which involves employees rating their managers (Leuchars, et al., 2003). This gives employees an opportunity to give upwards feedback and suggestions as results were used to develop new training plans for managers (Leuchars, et al., 2003).

In the MacLeod Review, a UK Government sponsored report of employee engagement chaired by David MacLeod and Nita Clarke (CIPD, 2012), MacLeod and Clarke (2009) also found that good internal communications increase employee engagement levels. Within the report, two organisational studies found that communication was the explanatory factor in best and worst organisations for engagement. Specifically, this communication was described in terms of several aspects; as senior management having a clear vision of their organisation and conveying this to their staff so that they understand how their role contributes to achieving business outcomes, management providing staff with feedback and appraisals and management listening to employees

concerns (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009). This first aspect was demonstrated by the Mercer findings from their 2002 People at Work Survey. (Attridge, 2009)

Considering the report of CIPD (2006a) research on the engagement of British employees, Woodruffe (2006) concludes that the top priority for engagement does seem to be communication. The report determines that an employee having the opportunity to feed their views and opinions upwards in their organisation as the most important engagement driver (CIPD, 2006a). MacLeod and Clarke (2009) reaffirmed this finding as they concluded that employee voice is one of four key enablers of engagement. Employees are given a voice when they can feed their opinions upwards in their organisation and they feel comfortable to speak out and challenge the organisation (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009). The second key factor identified by the report is employee's being kept informed regularly of activities in the organisation by management which links to Watson Wyatt's (2006) finding that highly engaged employees receive regular communication from their supervisor and senior management. These findings highlight that employees strive for a sense of involvement (CIPD, 2006a). For this to be achieved, employers must go beyond communication and strive to ensure that their employees feel like valued individuals rather than simply an employee of the organisation (Woodruffe, 2006). This emphasises the need for organisations to transition from a command and control management style to one that is more consultative and inclusive of employees (CIPD, 2009).

Johnson (2005) uses a case study of Sam Houston Electrics which demonstrates how a consultative and inclusive type of management can give employees a voice and can impact on engagement. After a critical analysis of the company, a key finding identified the need to develop and implement an effective internal communications plan as analysis revealed that firstly every employee was trained adequately in their own job but knew very little about how departments interacted and secondly employees were rarely given the opportunity to speak up to suggest ways of improving processes or customer service (Johnson, 2005). Following this, all employees became engaged in a communication process. According to the CEO of the company, "*connected employees*

are satisfied employees. And this connection is the direct result of two-way communication – between management and staff – about everything from the cooperative’s priorities and objectives, to training and education, to member communications” (Johnson, 2005: 53). Some of the methods implemented to ensure all employees receive important information included the creation of an intranet platform to facilitate information exchange as well as a training programme so that all employees are aware of the work of other departments. Since the implementation of this plan, Sam Houston Electric’s has seen an increase in satisfaction and engagement levels (Johnson, 2005).

Robinson, et al., (2004) also recognise two-way communication as a fundamental factor in ensuring and enhancing employee engagement as it allows the employee to voice their opinions and suggest ways of improving things. It should also involve management informing employees of everything that is relevant to them in the organisation. However, MacLeod and Clarke (2009) identified that there are key differences between communication and listening and that a move away from transactional two way communications and a move towards demonstrating that you are listening is needed; this results in a trusted dialogue as an employee knows that they have been heard. Giving employees a voice does not simply mean allowing them to speak out but also for them to feel that they are being listened to. For this to be achieved, MacLeod and Clarke (2009) contend that there needs to be a strong sense of openness and receptiveness in the organisation between staff and management.

Communication also plays an important role in developing trust in an organisation. It contributes to how trustworthy employees perceive leaders to be; it is essential that leaders are able to lead effectively in order to engage employees (Beslin & Reddin, 2004). Building of this trust is, of course, a team effort, although leaders must make a considerable personal effort for this to take effect (Beslin & Reddin, 2004)

2.5 Summary

The concept of employee engagement is one which is much debated, researched and written about; as are the drivers which enhance it. As evidenced in the literature, it has been established that one key driver of engagement is communication. Therefore, there is definitely a link between the two constructs which can be explored further. It is apparent that one of the key elements of communication which drives employee engagement is management effectively communicating the vision of the organisation so that employees understand how their work contributes to achieving business objectives. Secondly, is the two-way communication relationship between staff and management which allows for employees to feel that they can express their opinions to management, that these opinions are valued and most importantly that they are listened to. These items will be addressed in the research instrument used in this study and will be discussed further in chapter 3.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction and Objectives

This chapter will outline the methodological framework used for this research firstly outlining the objectives of the study. The research strategy and design which have been chosen and the justifications for doing so will be discussed. Ethical considerations and measures used to ensure reliability and validity of the research will also be discussed.

This study focuses on establishing engagement levels and exploring the influence of organisational communication on engagement within the context of a medium sized private sector company, 'Organisation X'. It is an IT company with three locations in Ireland and approximately 375 staff members at present. Since its establishment, it has built up major domestic and international customers and has grown quickly.

The research aim of this study is: to explore the influence of organisational communications on employee engagement levels in organisation X.

The objectives of this study are:

1. *To identify the current employee engagement level in organisation X*
2. *To establish employee's perceptions of communication in organisation X*
3. *To determine whether engagement levels differ between employee categories.*

The Institute for Employment Studies, (Robinson, et al., 2004) in their quantitative study of employees in fourteen organisations in the UK's health service, found that staff grades and working hours can make a significant difference to engagement levels. Sub-objective 5 will attempt to test this in an Irish workplace. It will also establish whether there is a difference in engagement levels in relation to work location.

4. *To determine whether perceptions of organisational communication differ between employee categories.*

Much of the literature in this area focuses on whether management effectively communicate the organisation's vision to employees and if this is not correctly done employees may not engage in their work (Attridge, 2009). However, there

is limited literature in the area of the influence of effective or ineffective communication on the actual management. Therefore, sub-objective 6 will attempt to test whether perceptions of organisational communications differ between staff grades; these grades being staff, management and senior management. It will also establish whether there is a difference in perceived communications dependent on working patterns and work location.

5. *To establish whether employee's with positive perceptions of organisational communication have high engagement levels*

The CIPD (2006a), in their survey of the engagement of British employees, found that two key drivers of engagement involved communication, specifically; allowing employees to voice their opinions and management keeping employees informed of activities in their organisation. Creating this positive communication climate can positively impact engagement. Mercer, in their quantitative study of 2,500 employees in workplaces in the United States, also found that employees who felt that their management did not effectively communicate with them were much less satisfied with and committed to their roles than their counterparts who felt that their management communicated to them clearly and effectively (Attridge, 2009). This suggests that those who experience effective communication in the workplace are more likely to be satisfied and engaged in their role and committed to their organisation. Sub-objective 5 will attempt to prove a link between the two variables in organisation X.

3.2 Research Philosophy

Rather than first deciding on the research instrument for this study, careful consideration was given to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill's (2009: 108) 'research onion' to decide on the appropriate research philosophy, approach and strategy. Fundamentally, the data collection methods are supported by the chosen research methodology which in turn are supported by the chosen research perspective (Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, et al., 2009). Every research project is situated in a research philosophy

which “*tells us something of the ontological position of the researcher, their understanding of the nature of reality, in relation to the research being undertaken*” (Quinlan, 2011: 98). The suitability of a research philosophy depends on the hypothesis or objective of the research (Saunders, et al., 2009); it emerges from the conceptual framework which is contained in the research statement (Quinlan, 2011).

Research can be framed in the positivist, constructionist and interpretivist research perspectives (Quinlan, 2011). The positivist approach holds that there is one objective reality and that scientific quantifiable methods should be used in research (Quinlan, 2011). It is also supported by the belief that reality is independent from us (Collis & Hussey, 2009). Quinlan (2011) suggests that if the research project aims to establish the facts of a phenomenon, it is suitable to situate the project within a positivist framework. The researcher deems the positivist approach to be the most appropriate for this dissertation.

3.3 Research Approach

Secondly, the researcher considered the suitability of employing a deductive or inductive approach. A deductive approach is one in which a hypothesis or objective and theory are developed and a research strategy is designed to test this, while an inductive approach is one in which the researcher collects data prior to developing a theory and develops the theory after data analysis (Saunders, et al., 2009)

In research, deduction is used primarily with positivism while induction with interpretivism. Deduction is also used to explore and explain relationships between variables that have been measured quantitatively by a researcher that is entirely independent of the phenomenon under observation (Saunders, et al., 2009). Therefore, a deductive approach has been chosen as suitable for this research.

3.4 Research Purpose

This research aims to establish a correlation relationship between two variables:

- The **dependent** variable changes in response to changes in other variables:
Employee Engagement
- The **independent variable** causes changes in a dependent variable:
Organisational communication

(Saunders, et al., 2009)

“The classification of research purpose most often used in the research methods literature is the threefold one of exploratory, descriptive and explanatory” (Saunders, et al., 2009: 139). Explanatory studies emphasise the studying of a situation so as to explain a relationship between variables (Saunders, et al., 2009). Explanatory research requires data so that a theory or theories can be tested (Saunders, et al., 2009). This study can be described as explanatory research as it aims to establish and explain a relationship between two variables.

3.5 Research Strategy

The research strategies to choose from are as follows: experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography, archival research (Quinlan, 2011). It is possible to use each strategy for exploratory, descriptive and explanatory research (Saunders, et al., 2009). Therefore, the strategy should be chosen while giving consideration to the type of research, the hypothesis and objectives of the project and the knowledge the project hopes to obtain (Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, et al., 2009).

A survey strategy has been chosen for this research. In a positivist study, a survey methodology collects either primary or secondary data from a sample in order to analyse them statistically (Collis & Hussey, 2009). In this case, primary data will be collected. Survey strategies tend to use largely quantitative methods and are appropriate

for use in studies using a deductive approach (Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, et al., 2009). According to Collis and Hussey (2009) there are two types of survey; a descriptive survey and an analytical survey. An analytical survey is conducted to establish whether a relationship exists between multiple variables, as in the case of this research (Collis & Hussey, 2009).

A survey strategy will allow the researcher to collect and analyse quantitative data using both descriptive and inferential statistics (Saunders, et al., 2009). While questionnaires are one of the more common research instruments used in a survey strategy, it is not the only one; structured interviews also falls into this strategy (Saunders, et al., 2009).

3.6 Data Collection Methods

Quantitative and qualitative are terms used to describe two different techniques for data collection and data analysis (Saunders, et al., 2009). In considering which data collection methods will be used, it has been considered which methods are most suited to and appropriate for this particular research objective and also which may provide the necessary data (Quinlan, 2011). Quantitative methods are more commonly used in survey strategies but the research can have some qualitative element (Quinlan, 2011). However, within the positivist framework (and using a deductive research approach) it is more suitable to respond to the research statement by collecting and analysing quantitative data (Quinlan, 2011). Therefore, a quantitative collection method has been chosen for this research.

The population is quite large, as is common in survey strategy, and comprises of 375 people which are scattered geographically. A questionnaire within a survey strategy is an appropriate and effective research instrument to use when engaging with these types of populations (Quinlan, 2011). There are many advantages to using questionnaires (quantitative method) over interviews (qualitative method); they are less expensive, provide anonymity for respondents, the researcher is independent of the phenomenon and there is less chance of bias (Saunders, et al., 2009). At the same time, there are also

disadvantages to using questionnaires over interviews for example you cannot ask a respondent to elaborate on an answer (Saunders, et al., 2009).

It is evident from the literature that industry practitioners and professional bodies such as Gallup, the CIPD, Mercer, Towers Perrin and The Institute for Employment Studies who investigate employee engagement do so by measuring engagement through quantitative methods in the forms of reliable and valid questionnaires. In addition to this, Melcrum which is an organisation that specialises in internal and employee communications measure communication within organisations with the use of questionnaires. It may be that because these types of questionnaires aim to gather opinions, views and feelings from employees about their organisation, that they would be more reluctant to reveal this information using a research instrument that cannot assure complete anonymity for example, interviews.

Questionnaires are structured in a way that each participant is asked the same set of clear and precise questions, and therefore it is an efficient way to collect clear and precise responses from a sample prior to analysis (Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, et al., 2009). However, the researcher must ensure that the questionnaire will collect the necessary data to achieve the research objectives.

3.6.1 Questionnaire Design

During the course of the questionnaire design, the following key issues were considered:

- The content of the questions
- The construction and presentation of each of the questions
- The order of the questions
- The length of the questionnaire

(Quinlan, 2011: 337)

Also, research of organisation X was carried out by browsing through the organisations' internet site and publications to gain an understanding of organisation X (Quinlan, 2011). In addition to this, the researcher was provided with copies of previous employee attitude and engagement questionnaires previously used by organisation X.

In order to produce a precise questionnaire, the researcher studied many questionnaires in the literature, in questionnaire databases and among industry practitioners while considering the data requirements of the project (Quinlan, 2011). The researcher had access to the American Psychological Association's database of questionnaires which stores numerous validated and reliable questionnaires on employee engagement and communication. In addition to these, the researcher also studied questionnaires from industry practitioners and professional bodies including the CIPD, Gallup, The Institute for Employment Studies and Melcrum. Given the nature of the research, it was not appropriate to replicate one questionnaire.

Rather, the researcher replicated relevant questions from several reliable and validated questionnaires incorporating the two variables into the questionnaire. The researcher replicated items from CIPD employee engagement questionnaires (2010a; 2004b), the Gallup 12 item level worker engagement index (2013) and two communication measures from the American Psychological Association's database; Liu, Chua and Stahl's (2010) Quality of Communication Experience Scale and; O'Reilly and Robert's (1976) Information Accuracy and Communication Openness Measure. Several new questions were also developed to fit the purpose of the study. As the questionnaire was replicated from reliable and validated questionnaires developed by other researchers and industry practitioners, it has helped to improve the reliability of the questionnaire.

As previously mentioned in chapter 2, the researcher used Guest and Conway's (2004) key elements from engagement questionnaires to categorise the engagement items in the questionnaire for this research. These are:

- Satisfaction
- Motivation

- Fairness and Trust
- Work Life Balance
- Loyalty and Commitment

Communication items were categorised by theme. These categories or elements of internal organisational communication were also identified in the communication literature reviewed for the research and the two communication scales from which questions were replicated (Liu, Chua & Stahl, 2010; O'Reilly & Robert's 1976). They are as follows:

- Clarity
- Information Accuracy
- Openness of Communication
- Communications with your Manager
- Regularity of Communication
- Communication Channels

The questionnaire (see appendix C) comprised of 54 questions in total. The first section consisted of nine basic demographic questions (which were information with independent alternative questions) for the purpose of comparison (Quinlan, 2011). These questions did not contain any identifiable data and were based on demographic questions commonly used by organisation X in their employee questionnaires surveys.

The main body of the questionnaire was divided into the two categories of 'communications' and 'engagement', as mentioned above. These were not visible to the respondent. The sub-headings within these categories were visible to the respondent. There were 24 items to measure perceptions of communication and 21 items to measure engagement. All items were linked to the research objectives and replicated from the questionnaires mentioned previously. The researcher used at least two items per sub-heading to ensure that the area was tested thoroughly and to ensure reliability.

3.6.2 Closed Questions

For the majority of questions, a Likert style scale was utilised to measure responses. “*The Likert scale is useful in that as well as measuring the direction of attitudes, it also measures the forces of the attitudes*” (Quinlan, 2011: 327). However, a four point scale was used which eliminated the ‘neither agree nor disagree’ option. Some research has suggested that respondents can chose the neutral option due to social desirability bias; they may rather give an answer which is deemed to be socially acceptable rather than one which truly conveys their own opinion (Garland, 1991).

For several other questions, different response categories were provided for rating questions (Saunders, et al., 2009). These included:

- For ten questions, a four point frequency rating was used: always, frequently, rarely, never.
- For one question, a four point amount rating was used: a lot, some, only a little, none.
- For one question, a four point likelihood rating was used: definitely, probably, probably not, definitely not.
- There were also rating scales on a scale of 1-5 to measure satisfaction with current role, motivation in current role and satisfaction with work life balance.

For two questions, more descriptive scales were used to establish an understanding of feeling informed and trusting information within the organisation:

- I can always believe it, I can usually believe it, I can believe it about half of the time, I can seldom believe it and I can never believe it.
- I feel fully informed, I feel fairly well informed, I receive only a limited amount of information, I get to hear very little about what goes on.

These response categories were used to answer items in the CIPD (2010a; 2004b) engagement questionnaires and therefore the researcher did not want to affect the reliability or validity of the questionnaire by substantially altering the response choice.

A matrix grid of questions were used to record the responses of several questions, when the questions within a sub-heading all utilised the same rating response categories (Saunders, et al., 2009). This can be viewed in appendix C. Therefore, the numbering of the questionnaire in appendix C viewed in QuestionPro is slightly different to the numbering in the ‘Overall Questionnaire Results’ in appendices D and E. The numbering in Appendices D and E replicates the numbering of the variables that were used to conduct the analysis in SPSS.

3.6.3 Open-ended Questions

In studies with a large number of respondents, researchers tend to minimise the number of open-ended questions as the qualitative data is time consuming to code (Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, et al., 2009). Therefore, just three open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire. These questions will generate qualitative data on:

- What channel of communication respondents prefer to receive information through
- If the communication associated with their job could be changed in any way, indicate how
- Three words that best describe how respondents feel about coming to work.

These questions were included to allow respondents to elaborate on their answers and provide more meaningful data for the researcher.

N.B. Eight additional questions specific to organisation X were included at the end of the questionnaire to assess the effectiveness of programmes that took place in organisation X during the quarter. For the purpose of this research, these questions and answers have been removed from the research data and the appendix questionnaire (C) and the appendix of the overall results (D) as they are not relevant to this study.

3.6.4 Questionnaire Administration

Once the HR manager in organisation X received the questionnaire, they requested to use it to conduct their quarterly employee engagement questionnaire. The researcher agreed and therefore it was sent to every staff member of the organisation in each of the three Irish locations.

The questionnaire was administered electronically; an internet-mediated questionnaire (Saunders, et al., 2009). It was distributed using survey distribution software, QuestionPro, frequently used by organisation X. From this system, data could easily be exported to SPSS for analysis. Online questionnaires suited the population as all participants had computer access. Saunders et al. (2009) identified the advantages of using internet-mediated questionnaires as having a high confidence rate that the right person has responded, less financial resource implications, minimal time needed for data input and better accuracy due to a low likelihood of distortion of answers.

Originally, an introductory page outlining the research and a final page thanking participants were included in the questionnaire. However, as organisation X used this questionnaire as their own quarterly employee engagement questionnaire, these were removed. All participants were, however, made aware that the questionnaire was part of this research and a cover email (see appendix B) was sent to the HR manager to be distributed with the link for the questionnaire.

3.6.5 Pilot Study

The assumptions the researcher makes about how participants will respond to questions in a questionnaire are not always correct (Quinlan, 2001). Therefore, a pilot questionnaire was administered to establish how participants will respond to the questionnaire (Quinlan, 2011).

Bell (2005) suggests you should use a pilot study to find out the following:

- How long the questionnaire took the complete

- The clarity of instructions
- If any questions were unclear
- Which, if any, questions the respondent felt uncomfortable answering
- Whether, in their opinion, there were any topic omissions
- If the layout was clear
- Any additional comments

The pilot study was carried out with nine participants. They were similar to the actual respondents in the study as they all work in either full-time or part-time office setting employment. Any issues that the pilot study presented were dealt with before the real questionnaire was administered (Quinlan, 2011). This included:

- Giving more time frame options for staying with the organisation
- Improving the layout to ensure it was clear and attractive

3.7 Population and Sample

The researcher had a gatekeeper to organisation X and after requesting access through an email (see appendix A) and phone call, access was granted to conduct a study in the chosen area of research. There was no need to select a sample as data could be collected from the entire population i.e. every staff member of organisation X would receive the questionnaire (Saunders, et al., 2009).

The questionnaire was sent to the total number of staff members, 375, in three office locations. This meant that employees at every staff grade were targeted including both full-time and part-time employees. Of 338 questionnaires viewed, 252 were completed. This gives an overall completion rate of 75 per cent. However because the questionnaire was sent to 375 employees, the actual active response rate is 67 per cent. Of the previous three engagement questionnaires conducted by organisation X, the average overall completion rate is 76 per cent while the approximate average response rate is 66 per cent.

A large proportion of 79 per cent of the respondents were male while 21 per cent were females, with 71 per cent at staff grade, 25 per cent at management grade (including team leader and manager roles) and 4 per cent at senior management grade.

3.8 Time horizons

Time horizons for a research project can depend on the research question. However, it is also important to consider that the majority of research projects carried out during academic courses can be considerably time constrained (Robson, 2002). Therefore, this research project is a cross-sectional study – the study of a phenomenon at a particular time (Robson, 2002).

3.9 Reliability and Validity

Reliability and validity are treated differently depending on whether the research is quantitative or qualitative (Quinlan, 2011). Therefore, for this research project, it is important to consider the issues of reliability and validity in light of quantitative research. *“In quantitative research, the researcher is primarily concerned with measurement and with the precision of the data gathering instruments they use or develop for use in their research projects”* (Quinlan, 2011: 335). A questionnaire that is valid will mean that accurate data can be collected, and a reliable questionnaire will mean that the data is collected consistently (Saunders, et al., 2009).

3.9.1 Reliability

Reliability refers to consistency and more importantly the degree to which the research can be repeated while obtaining consistent results at different times, in different conditions and with different samples (Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, et al., 2009).

The questionnaire used in this research was replicated and built on many reliable questionnaires developed by other researchers and industry practitioners which has helped to improve reliability. In addition to this, Quinlan, (2011) suggests that using more than one item to measure a concept will help in improving reliability (discussed

also in 3.6.1). The administered pilot test will also have improved the reliability of the research instrument (Quinlan, 2011).

Robson (2002) has suggested some threats to reliability and how to overcome these. The first is participant error. A questionnaire completed at different times during a week may give different results. The questionnaire for this research was distributed at a 'neutral time', Wednesday morning, when employees are neither on a high at the end of the week or on a low at the beginning of the week. Secondly, there may be participant bias. Respondents may have answered in a way that they thought their manager wanted them to (refer back to social desirability bias in 3.6.2). When designing the questionnaire, the researcher ensured that every step was taken to provide anonymity to respondents to encourage them to be as truthful as possible. Third, there may be observer error. This is usually more common in qualitative research and interviews, however.

The researcher must also take non-response bias into consideration which is the bias which may occur in findings caused by respondents' refusal to take part in research (Saunders, et al., 2009). It is impossible to eliminate the occurrence of non-responses as they are likely to happen. Non-respondents are different from the rest of the research population as they refuse to be involved in the research. Therefore, the respondents are not an actual representation of the total population (Saunders, et al., 2009). Saunders et al. (2009) suggest that a researcher should analyse the refusals. But in this research, using an internet-mediated questionnaire makes it impossible to do so as non-respondents have simply chosen to not click on the link to the questionnaire and have provided no reason for doing so. However, as mentioned in chapter 3.7, the completion and response rates of this questionnaire were similar to those of the previous three engagement questionnaires conducted by organisation X.

A reliability analysis was carried out on the questionnaire using SPSS. Cronbach's alpha was used to give an indication of reliability. Two separate reliability analysis were carried out on 'part 2 – communications' and 'part 3 – engagement' (excluding open ended questions) to see if each would be a reliable measurement scale. In these cases,

scores of 0.908 and 0.924 respectively illustrated a good internal reliability and therefore allowed the researcher to continue to use the research instrument.

3.9.2 Validity

Validity refers to the ability of the questionnaire to measure what it is intended to measure and accomplish what it is designed to accomplish (Quinlan, 2011; Saunders, et al., 2009). Researchers establish validity by looking for evidence that will support the data gathered from their questionnaire (Quinlan, 2011).

There are different ways of establishing validity; content validity, face validity and criterion related validity (Quinlan, 2011). The researcher ensured content validity through careful reviewing of the literature and discussion with those more experienced in the field (Saunders, et al., 2009). The researcher improved the face validity of the questionnaire by consulting with the research supervisor. Finally, the researcher established criterion related validity by replicating and building on questionnaires which were developed and validated by more established researchers (Quinlan, 2011).

Additionally, in order for the questionnaire to be a valid measure of the phenomenon every item included in it must be relevant. The administered pilot test will also help improve the validity of the questionnaire (Quinlan, 2011).

3.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues are an important consideration throughout the entire research process and will require ethical integrity from the researcher (Saunders, et al., 2009).

Access to participants was discussed and approved through the gatekeeper (the HR manager) and all research participants have given voluntary and informed consent. When the questionnaire was administered, an email accompanied it detailing the nature of the research, how the data gathered would be used for the research and that confidentiality and anonymity of all participants was assured. Participants were also

provided with the researchers contact details if they wished to ask any questions or discuss further the nature of the questionnaire. The HR manager was notified that they would receive a copy of the research findings. The data obtained for the purpose of this research will be processed both fairly and lawfully and kept securely (Saunders, et al., 2009) The data was gathered for the sole purpose of being used in this research and the raw data does not allow for the identification of any participants.

The anonymity of the organisation has been carefully adhered to during the process, so that the name or identifiable information is contained nowhere in the research project. For the purpose of anonymity and confidentiality, the organisation which is the context of the study has been named 'organisation X' and the questionnaire and overall results (see appendix C, D and E) have been redacted so as not to reveal the identity of organisation X.

It has been ensured that bias has been avoided at each stage of the research; the design stage, data gathering, data analysis and at the stage of developing findings (Quinlan, 2011). The researcher will in no way influence the research findings or allow the favour of a particular result to lead to bias in the research.

3.11 Data Analysis

The data gathered from the research will be analysed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). SPSS Statistics can be used to discover differences and relationships in data (Babbie, Halley, Wagner & Zaino, 2011) and works very well in the analysis of questionnaire data (Quinlan, 2011).

The variables will be measured and tested against one another using a variety of SPSS tests to produce both descriptive and inferential statistics in order to determine whether relationship exists between perceptions of organisational communication and employee engagement levels and to answer the objectives of the research. Descriptive statistics were used to achieve objectives 1 and 2 while inferential statistics were used achieve objectives 3, 4 and 5. It was ensured that the appropriate inferential tests were used by

analysing the design of the study, the number of variables used, the nature of the data and levels of measurement and characteristics of the sample. As the data was found to not be normally distributed using a Shapiro-Wilk W test (Sig. was less than 0.5) non-parametric tests were used (Saunders, et al. 2009). The non-parametric tests used for the study are; Mann-Whitney U Test, Kruskal-Wallis Test and Spearman rho Correlation.

Cohen (1988) suggests the following guidelines to determine the strength of a relationship between two variables:

Small $r = .10$ to $.29$

Medium $r = .30$ to $.49$

Large $r = .50$ to 1.0

These guidelines will be used in chapter 4.

There are some open-ended questions in the questionnaire which will gather qualitative data and this will be analysed in terms of content, sorting it both thematically and categorically (Quinlan, 2011). Once all themes have been identified within the data, these will be collapsed into sets. This allows for the meaning of the data to emerge in relation to the aims of the research (Quinlan, 2011).

3.12 Recoding and Computing

Once the SPSS data file was set up, the appropriate levels of measurement were assigned to each variable. Many items in the questionnaire needed to be reverse scored for the purpose of analysis and to give an accurate understanding of the engagement level in organisation X. The following questions included in the engagement scale were recoded in the following way 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree and 4 = strongly agree; Questions 34, 35, 36, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 48, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54. Questions 37, 38 and 47 (which are on a scale of 1 to 5) were recoded so that 1 now represents the most negative response and 5 the highest extreme of motivation or

satisfaction. Question 39 was excluded from recoding as it is an open ended question as was question 49 as it was a negatively phrased question.

Items in the communication scale were also reverse scored so that the higher the numerical score, the more positive the perception of communication. The following questions in the communication scale were recoded in the following way 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree and 4 = strongly agree; Questions 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30. Question 15 was recoded so that 5 now represents the most positive response and 1 represents the most negative response. Questions 31, 32 and 33 were excluded from recoding as they are open ended questions and questions 18 was not recoded as it is a negatively phrased questions.

The ‘compute variables command’ which is “*an SPSS Statistics command that allows for data transformation*” (Babbie, et al., 2011: 417) was used to create two new variables by computing existing variables. Twenty engagement variables (this excluded question 39 as it is an open ended question) were computed to form overall engagement levels (TotalEE). Twenty one communication variables (this excluded questions 31, 32 and 33 as two of these were open ended questions and one was used to select communication channel preference) were computed to form overall perception of communication (TotalComms). Therefore, a total average score of both engagement and perceptions of communication could be created.

3.13 Limitations

As the research is employing quantitative methods, it is understood that the researcher will not gain a deep understanding of employees’ attitudes which qualitative methods may allow for. However, as has been described in the literature, industry practitioners and professional bodies such as the CIPD, Gallup, Mercer and The Institute for Employment Studies measure employee engagement through quantitative methods.

In addition to this, the study has been carried out in one medium sized private sector IT organisation and therefore it may not be possible to generalise the results to other organisations or even the industry.

4 Findings and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of the data gathered in line with the research methodology outlined in chapter 3. It will do so by using descriptive and inferential statistics, as well as a discussion of the qualitative data gathered from the questionnaire. The qualitative data has been redacted for the purposes of anonymity and confidentiality. This chapter will also present the discussion of results with a focus on achieving the research objectives identified in chapter 3.1. The analysis has been structured around these research objectives and therefore this chapter will be presented in this order. There will also be reference back to the literature which will help in understanding the data.

4.2 Respondent Profile

The profile of respondents consisted of 79% male employees and 21% female employees. Although this seems like a relatively low figure of female employees in an organisation, the HR manager in organisation X notified the researcher that this is in fact quite a high proportion of female employees considering the industry that they are in. 41% of respondents are in the 25 – 34 age group and 41% in the 35 – 44 age group. 11% are in the 45-54 age group, 5% in the 18-24 group with a very low percentage of 2 in the 55 and over age group.

Respondents were asked to indicate their office location as the questionnaire was distributed to three national locations. As expected, the largest proportion of respondents were from the Dublin office; 90%. Collectively 10% of respondents were from the two other national office locations with 8% being from one location and 2% from the other. Respondents were also asked to indicate how long they have been with the organisation; 46% answered between 1 and 4 years, 34% answered less than one year, 17% answered between 5 and 10 years and 3% answered 10 or more years.

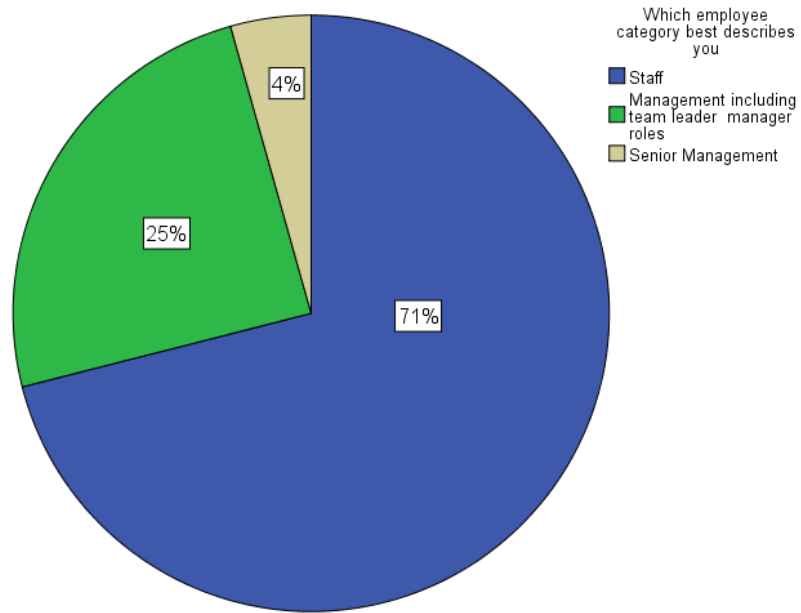


Figure 1 Respondents by Staff Grade

Figure 1 illustrates the respondents by staff grade. A high proportion of respondents lie in the 'staff' category which makes up 71% of the total population. 25% of managers (including team leader and manager roles) and 4% of senior managers make up a total of 29% at management or above grade.

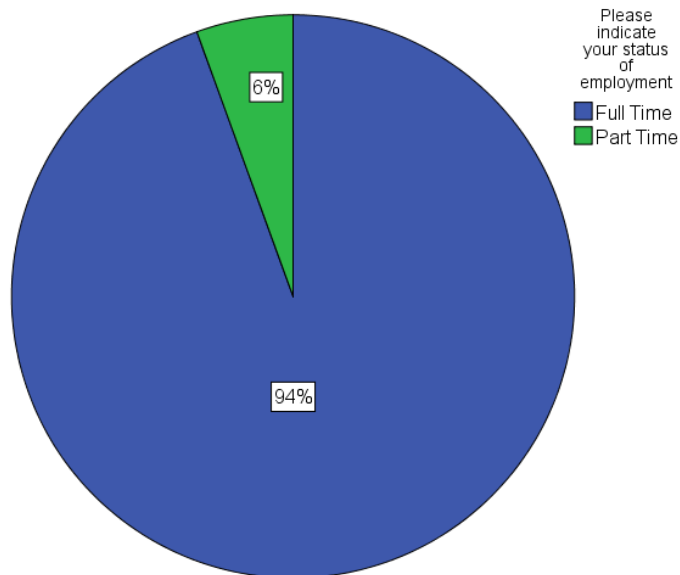


Figure 2 Respondents by Status of Employment

Figure 2 illustrates the respondents by status of employment. It is evident that the majority, as expected, of respondents are in full time employment in organisation X. A low proportion of 6% of respondents are employed by organisation X on a part time basis.

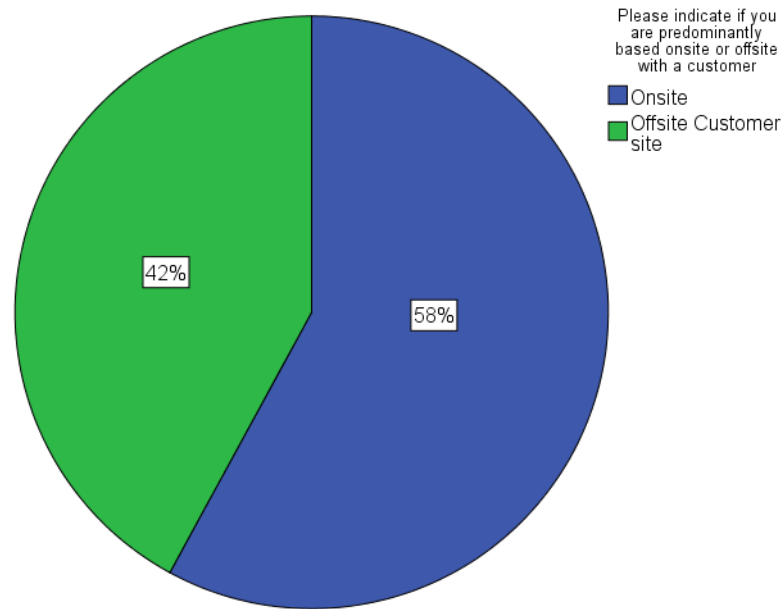


Figure 3 Respondents by Onsite vs. Offsite

Figure 3 illustrates the respondents by whether they work onsite in organisation X's office location or offsite in a customer site. The researcher had been made aware that many employees work offsite so as expected, 42% of respondents work on a customer site while 58% of respondents work onsite in the offices of organisation X.

4.3 Findings for objective 1

To identify the current employee engagement level in organisation X

Using excel, the researcher calculated the employee engagement level of organisation X. As mentioned in chapter 3.12, items were reverse scored so that it would determine the higher the score on each question, the higher the engagement level of the individual. The response for each respondent was added up to give a total of their responses; this

was carried out by computing the 20 engagement variables to give each respondent's total (as mentioned in chapter 3.12). Each respondent's total was divided by the number of questions in the scale; 20. This gave each respondent's response average. However, to get the overall average, each respondent's average was then added together and divided by the number of respondents in the study. Using the engagement scale for the purposes of this study, this gives an average engagement score of 3.1 out of a maximum possible 4.15. To understand this more clearly a percentage was calculated giving a 75% engagement score for organisation X.

It can be difficult to benchmark engagement scores as they can differ between country, industry and size of the organisation. However, for the purposes of comparison, Aon Hewitt (2013) reported that the global average employee engagement score for 2013 was 60% (this research represents 3.8 million employees in 2,560 organisations globally) which may indicate that organisation X have a higher than average engagement score, but again it is very difficult to benchmark when it is not possible to do so against a similar sized organisation in the same industry in Ireland. It will be interesting to benchmark internally later on in this chapter, against for example staff grades.

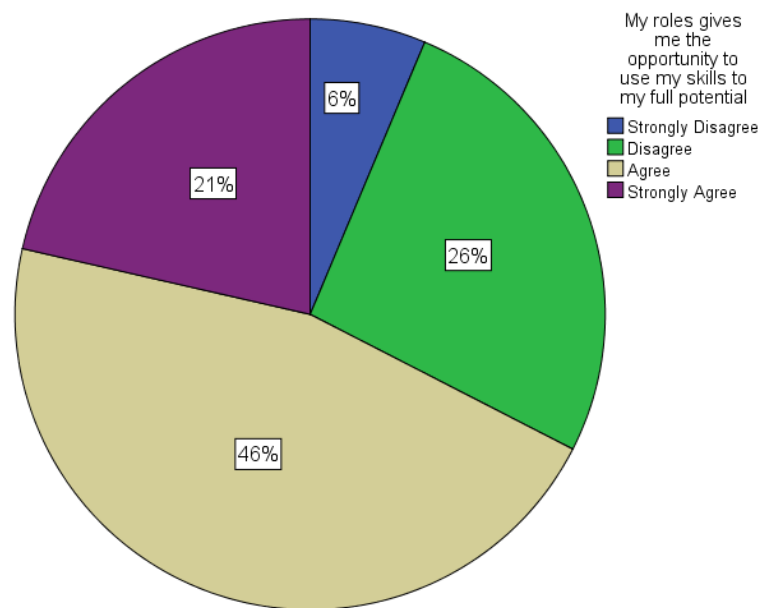


Figure 4 Role gives me the opportunity to use my skills

Figure 4 illustrates that 46% of respondents agree that their role allows them to use their skills to their full potential. However, a combined total of 32% either disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. Although, a combined total of 94% either strongly agree or agree that “*The work I do in my role is worthwhile*” (question 34).

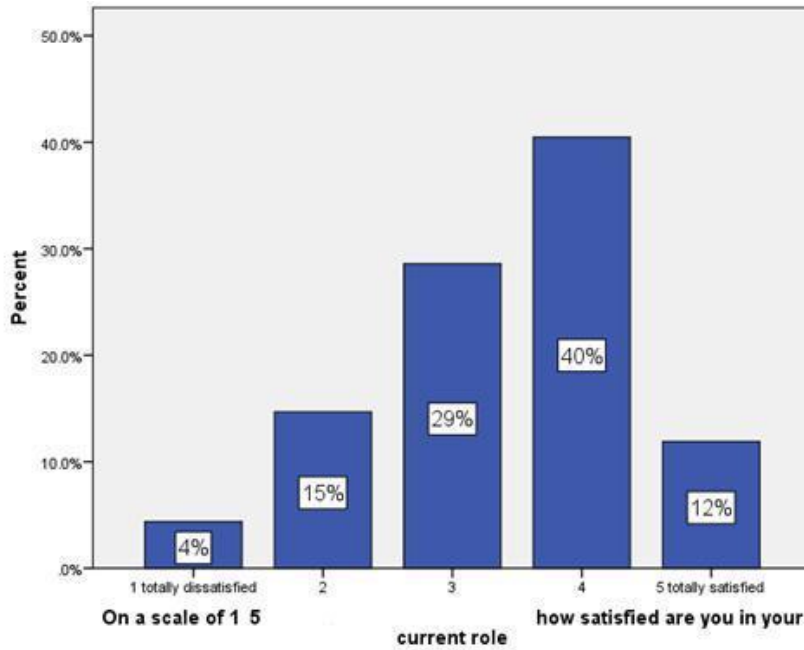


Figure 5 How satisfied are you in your role

The highest proportion of respondents rated a 4 on the satisfaction scale. This is a positive sign for engagement as CIPD (2006) concluded that experiencing high job satisfaction is directly linked to engagement. Following this, 29% rated themselves in the middle of the scale. Just 12% of respondents reported themselves as being totally satisfied in their role. The motivation scale (“*On a scale of 1 – 5 how motivated do you feel in your current role*”) yielded similar results with 38% rating themselves as a 4 and 30% rating themselves as a 3.

N.B. These two scales have been reverse scored so that figure 5 does not match the codes for the scale in appendix C and D. Therefore, 5 now represents totally satisfied and extremely motivated.

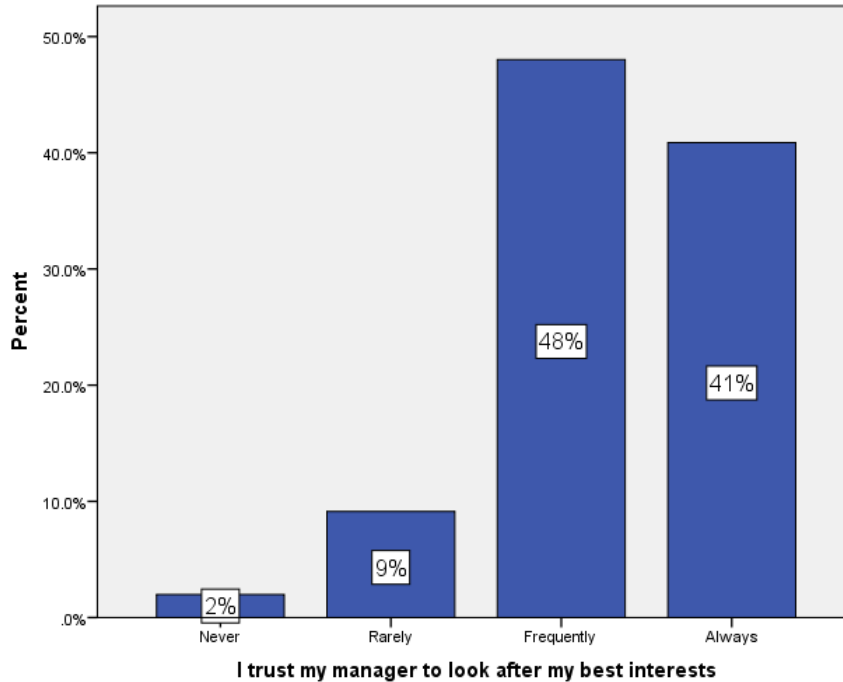


Figure 6 I trust my manager

Beslin and Reddin (2004) emphasised the importance of measuring trust in engagement surveys as it gives a good indication of how trustworthy employees consider their line managers and senior management to be. Employees developing a sense of trust is crucial for engagement as it is difficult for the management to engage them if they do not trust them. There were three items in total rating trust in the questionnaire; trusting colleagues, trusting their manager to look after their best interests and trusting senior management to look after their best interests. Interestingly, 38% always trust their colleagues while 41% always trust their manager (illustrated in Figure 6). However, a much lower proportion of 21% say they always trust senior management while 59% say they ‘frequently’ trust them. As such a low proportion say that they always trust them this may need to be addressed as this could be a hindrance to engagement. Trust can be developed when organisations are honest and take the time to explain to employees what they are doing and why exactly (Armstrong, 2012).

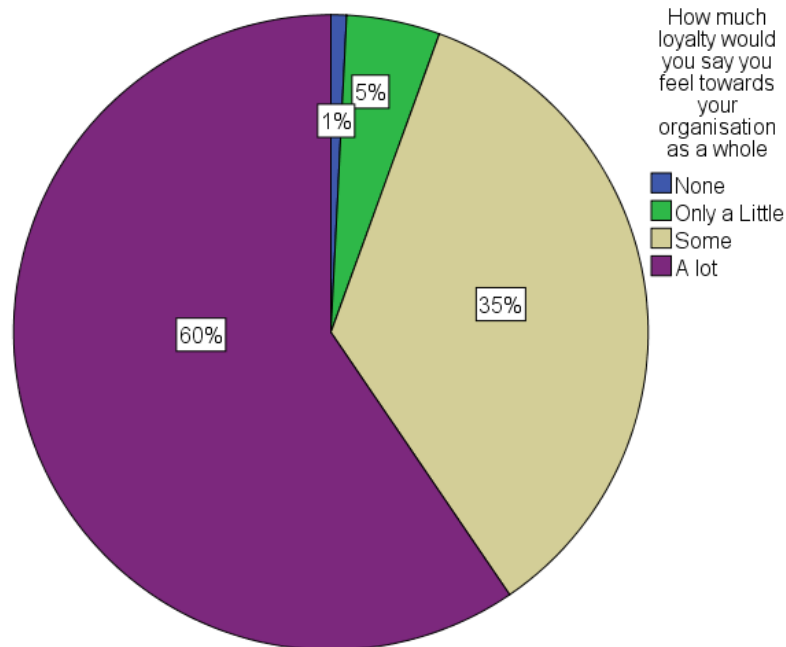


Figure 7 Loyalty towards your organisation

Devi (2009) believes that as employees become more committed to their organisation, their engagement level rises. Loyalty can be a good indicator of commitment. A large proportion of 60% say that they feel a lot of loyalty towards their organisation which is an extremely good indicator. A minute 1% say that they feel none. In addition to this, Gallup (Cook, 2008) have shown that employees with high engagement levels are less likely to leave the organisation. In organisation X, (in answer to question 54) 40% of respondents indicated that they plan to stay with organisation X for more than 4 years while just 8% indicated less than 1 year.

4.3.1 Qualitative Data for Engagement

There was one open ended question in the engagement part of the questionnaire which produced some qualitative data; question 39 *'List three words that best describe how you feel about coming to work'*. The results were sorted thematically and then categorised using these themes (see appendix E). It was thought that the most appropriate categories would be; 'positive language', 'neutral language' and 'negative language'. In the response given by each respondent, there was rarely inclusion of both

positive and negative language in one answer. There were, however, neutral with positive and neutral with negative.

Some of the negative words which stood out to the researcher were; ‘unappreciated’, ‘underutilised’ and ‘underused’. This may indicate their role does not give them the opportunity to use their skills to their full potential. This is interesting as, in question 36, 32% either disagreed or strongly disagreed that ‘*My role gives me the opportunity to use my skills to my full potential*’. Thought to be the most striking response, by the researcher, was that of ‘disengaged’. This indicates that the respondent is fully aware of their disengagement from their job and may be unhappy with that. Neutral language included; ‘normal’, ‘ok’ and ‘self-motivated’ among others. Another comment indicated a heavy workload; “*it depends on the workload that day, sometimes it’s dread, sometimes it’s grand*”. A comment stating; “*Sunday evening dread, (not organisation X’s fault, client environment is the issue)*” indicates that a respondent may be not be engaged in their role purely because of the client organisation. However, this is something which is very difficult for organisation X to address. Positive language included; ‘committed’, ‘motivated’, ‘satisfied’, ‘supported’ and, most strikingly to the researcher, ‘engaged’ and ‘engaging’ were listed numerous times. It has been identified that previous constructs such as satisfaction and commitment are the foundations of employee engagement (Markos & Sridevi, 2010). These are therefore good indicators of employees who are engaged in their roles (Watson Wyatt, 2006).

4.4 Findings for objective 2

To establish employee’s perceptions of communication in organisation X

Using the same method as described in chapter 4.3, the researcher calculated an average score of perceived communication. It determines that the higher the response rate, the more positive perceptions of communication. For the purpose of this study, that gives an average score of 3.26 for perceptions of communication out of a maximum possible 4.05.

To understand this more clearly a percentage was calculated giving a perceived communications rate of 80%. This indicates that on average 80% of the responses were positive. This implies that employees in organisation X have quite positive perceptions of internal communication.

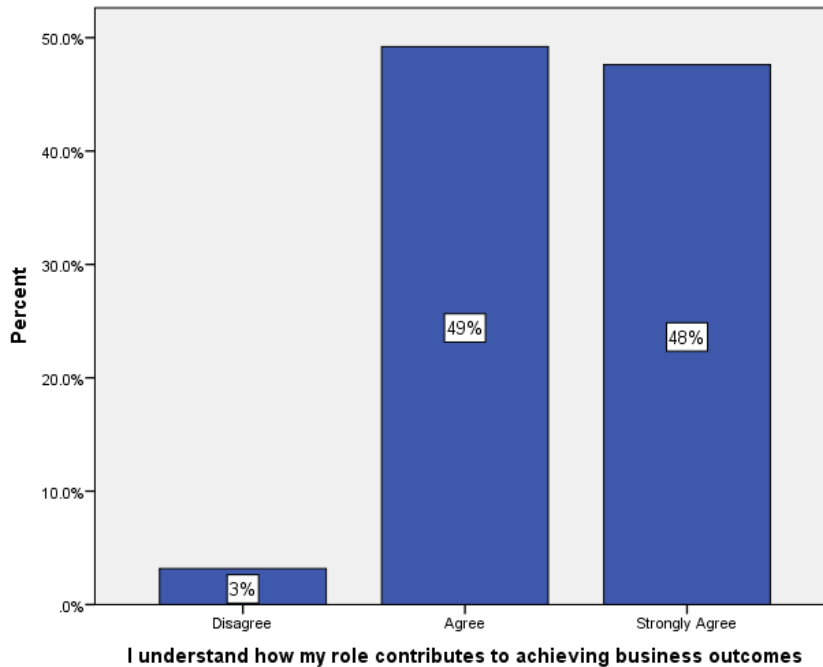


Figure 8 Understand how my role contributes

Employees understanding how their role contributes to achieving organisational goals and business outcomes is an important aspect associated with engagement according to MacLeod and Clarke (2009). For employees to understand this adequately, it is likely to be a result of effective communication of the organisation’s vision from senior management (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009). Figure 8 illustrates an encouraging proportion of 97% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed that they understood how their role contributes to achieving business outcomes. This is a very good indicator of engaged employees who understand the vision of their organisation. In addition to this, 93% strongly agreed or agreed to question 12 “*I have a clear vision of where the organisation is going*” while just 7% either strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement.

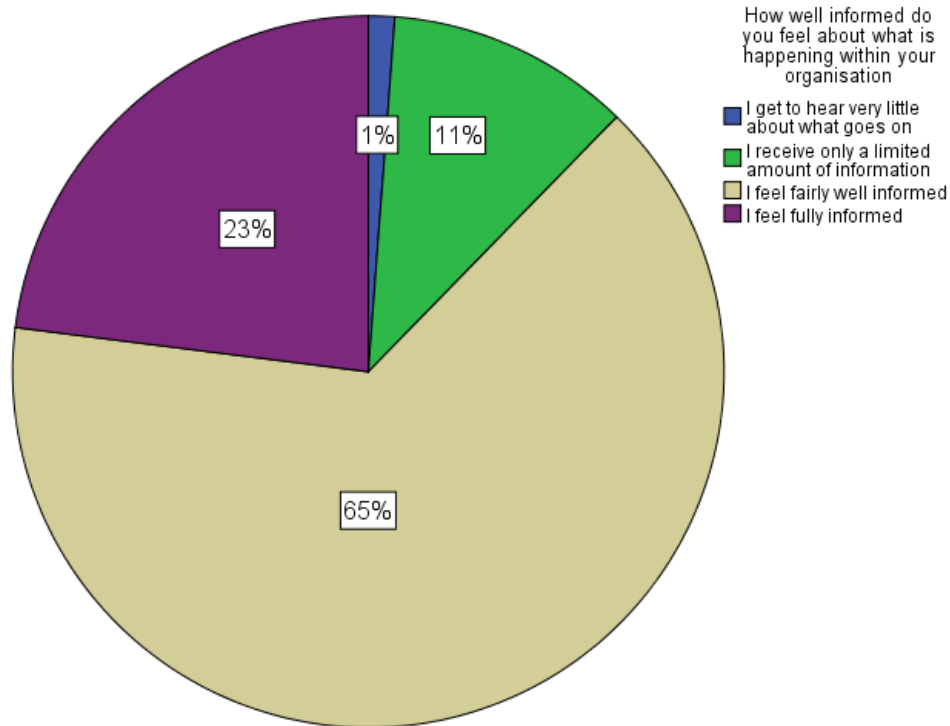


Figure 9 How well informed do you feel

So that a communicated message is effective, it is important for the sender to ensure that it is accurate and timely (Rouse & Rouse, 2005). If these elements are not part of the communication, it is less effective and may not be believed, trusted or listened to. In response to question 14, 75% of respondents indicated that they frequently “*receive information in a timely manner*” while just 17% always receive it this way. Just 8% said that they rarely do.

In order to ensure effective communication, managers must explain why decisions and changes have been made and how it may affect employees (Armstrong, 2012). In contrast to findings from the CIPD (2010b) which indicated only half of participants felt fairly or fully informed about what was happening in their organisation, Figure 9 illustrates that a significant 88% feel fairly or fully informed in organisation X. This is a very good indicator of effective internal communication. In addition to this, CIPD (2006a) research also emphasise that being kept informed of activities occurring in the

organisation is one of two important engagement drivers. The 2010 CIPD (2010b) findings also indicated just 55% felt that they can usually or always believe information which they receive about their organisation. Again in stark contrast to this, a significant proportion of 94% (in response to question 15) felt that they can always or usually believe information about their organisation.

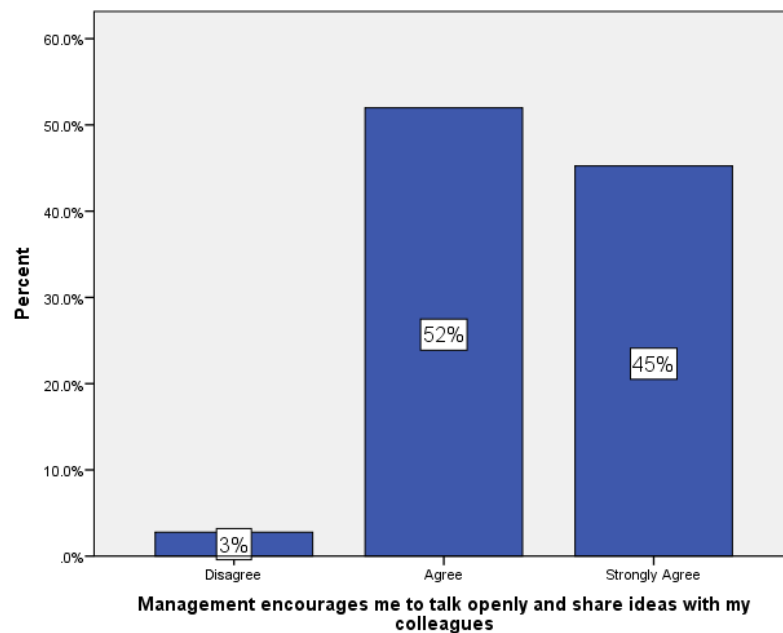


Figure 10 Management encourages me to talk openly

MacLeod and Clarke (2009) identified employee voice as one of four key enablers of engagement. Figure 10 illustrates that 45% of respondents strongly agreed while 52% agreed that they are encouraged to talk openly and share ideas with colleagues. Just 3% disagreed with this statement while there was 0% in disagreement. 62% of respondents also agreed that “*Management involve people in decisions that affect their roles or work environment*”. Turner (2003) believes that upward communication is something that at best is mediocre in organisations. However, it is evident that this is not the case in organisation X as, in response to question 21 “*How satisfied are you with the channels that exist to feed your views/issues/ideas upwards to management*”, 23% agreed and 66% strongly agreed meaning that 89% of respondents were in agreement with this statement. In addition to this, 56% say that their “*manager/team leader listens*

to me if I have suggestions to make” while 37% say this frequently happens. This is a good indicator that employees in organisation X are engaged as Woodruffe (2006) cited, from CIPD research results, employees having the opportunity to feed their views and opinions upward as the most important engagement driver.

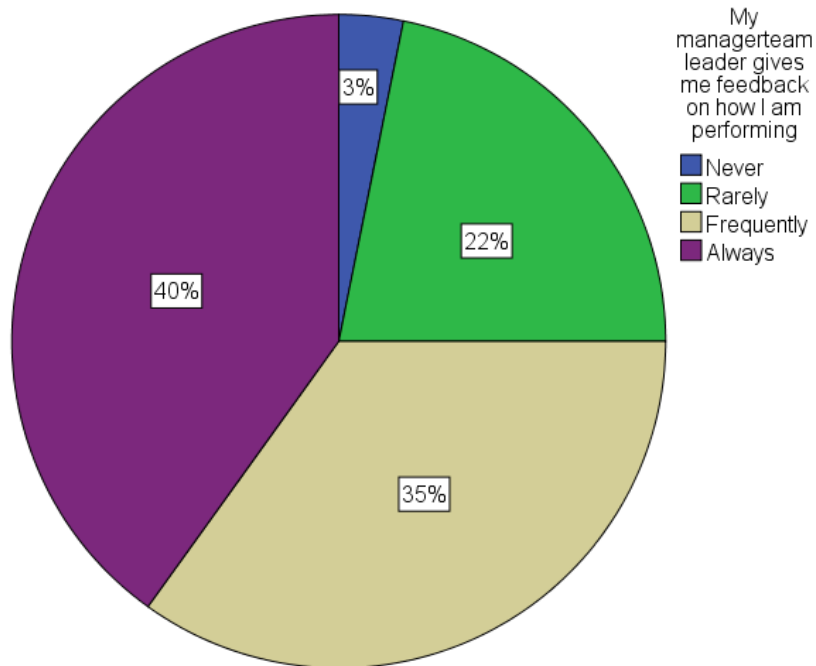


Figure 11 My manager gives me feedback

MacLeod and Clarke’s (2009) report concluded that one of three communication drivers of engagement is that of management providing staff with sufficient feedback and appraisals. Ruck and Trainor (2011) found from their research that 81% of their respondents stressed the desire to focus a lot more on employee feedback. Illustrated in Figure 11, 40% of respondents in organisation X strongly agree that their manager always gives them feedback on how they are performing while 22% say rarely and 3% never. In addition to this, 40% either strongly disagreed or disagreed that their “*manager holds regular 1:1’s*” (question 28). Although the majority of questions in the ‘Communication with your manager’ subsection scored quite high, giving feedback was one of the lowest scored questions. This may indicate that although employees have the

information to do their job well and feel supported, they may still require more regular feedback.

In relation to employee-manager communication, 63% of respondents feel that their manager 'always' communicates openly and honestly with them. This figure is much more encouraging than those from the Towers Perrin (MacLeod & Clarke, 2009) which indicate that just 31% of employees think the same.

In response to question 31, respondents indicated that 27% of the organisation's communication is through email. Although email does not have the personal approach of face-to-face, it has the advantages of immediacy and cost-effectiveness (Turner, 2003). 25% of all communication happens through general meetings while 23% through team meetings. Larkin & Larkin (1996) believe that face-to-face meetings are the most effective channel to communicate major organisational change through rather than email or publications and they offer benefits which technology cannot. Actually taking the time to talk to someone demonstrates the commitment of an organisation to their employees (Holwerda, 2007). 14% of all communications are through newsletters which can be an effective channel of communicating information that focuses on information which employees would be most concerned with (Armstrong, 2012). 11% of communication is through the grapevine which can be an accurate and immediate communication channel (Rouse & Rouse, 2005). However, as the CIPD (2010b) suggest a mix of channels, which is evident in organisation X, can be the most effective communication mechanisms.

4.4.1 Qualitative Data for Communication

There were two open ended questions in the communication part of the questionnaire which produced some qualitative data; question 32 '*What channel of communication do you prefer to receive information through?*' and question 33 '*If the communication associated with your job could be changed in any way, please indicate how below*'.

The results for question 32 were sorted so that the number of times each communication channel was given was recorded to establish the preferred channels. Email was chosen as the most preferred channel with 111 respondents indicating that this is one of their preferred methods. Team meetings were directly behind this with 72 respondents indicating that they prefer this method of communication. Interestingly one respondent did indicate “*email but face to face is best*”, possibly acknowledging that email is the most used channel but if face to face would be possible they would prefer it. Several respondents indicated that it depends on the information being communicated with one specifying “*Email or newsletters are fine for uncontroversial factual updates. Organisational/ structural changes, significant process changes etc. are probably better communicated through meetings of some kind, since there are likely to be questions*” and another stated “*Depending on the nature of the information it differs. Important company information is good in general meetings or team meetings*”. While another respondent indicated “*No real preference, but would prefer meeting than in writing if it’s a big announcement*”. This point supports Larkin and Larkin’s (1996) that channels utilising face to face communication are more appropriate for communicating major organisational changes rather than publications or email. As mentioned in chapter 4.4, the CIPD (2010b) suggest that a mix of channels can be the most effective mechanism for communication. As two respondents put it “*Multiple (channels) to ensure the message makes it to everyone*” and “*I believe a variety of channels are required to ensure effective communication*”.

The results for question 33 were sorted thematically and then categorised using those themes; ‘no change needed’, ‘intranet & email’, ‘meetings’, ‘1:1’, ‘speed of communication’, ‘communication of future plans’, ‘changes to quarterly briefing’, ‘CPD’, ‘working off site’, ‘interaction’, ‘openness’ and a ‘miscellaneous’ category was included for 6 responses which did not fall into the others. Four respondents indicated that they are happy with the communication associated with their job and that no change is needed. The two most reoccurring changes were in relation to intranet & email and meetings. Firstly, many respondents indicated that they would like increased communication via the intranet. Also, one respondent indicated in response to question

32 that they “*would like to see the intranet used more for internal communications*”. As Martin, Reddington and Kneafsey (2007) have highlighted, organisations need to take advantage of the opportunities which new technologies have brought. And if organisations are unwilling to adopt new technologies, employees may become disconnected until the organisation is eventually forced to. An intranet also offers a more connected channel of communication which can be company monitored (Turner, 2003) and therefore should be encouraged and utilised as much as possible. Johnson (2005) also highlights in a case study of Sam Houston Electrics that one of their methods for increasing communication effectiveness which lead to increased satisfaction and improved engagement levels was the implementation of an intranet system.

Secondly, many respondents indicated that they would like more frequent meetings and for them to be made mandatory. Meetings and team briefings are an effective channel of communication when enthusiasm comes from the top of the organisational hierarchy (Armstrong, 2012), so this must be ensured. However, it is essential to highlight Larkin and Larkin’s (1996) point that face-to-face communication does not always mean large meetings. Several respondents also indicated that they would prefer more 1:1 regular meetings, which can be due to its’ personal approach (Turner, 2003). Several respondents also indicated a desire to change the format of the quarterly briefing with one respondent suggesting “*divisional briefings instead of the quarterly briefing, which is a waste of time*”. Another respondent also, strikingly put it that “*the quarterly briefing is fine and does what it says, however, there is no opportunity either prior/during these briefings for staff to raise questions/topics etc. that they may wish to discuss. It’s very much a one-way communication style – it should be opened up so that staff can have input into the briefing agenda and/or be allowed to raise questions over items raised during the briefing*”. This is concerning as many of the key aspects of communication which drive engagement highlight that employees want a sense of involvement (CIPD, 2006a) and utilising a management style which is consultative and inclusive of employees is a way of achieving that (CIPD, 2009).

Respondents indicated that 11% of all internal communication is through the grapevine in response to question 31. This may be as a result of the timeliness of formal communication channels. Although, 75% of respondents said that they frequently receive information in a timely manner, the qualitative data indicates slightly differently. One respondent indicated that *“Could be quicker i.e. arrive before the grapevine”*. Two more respondents indicated that timely communication was an issue; *“Timely responses/updates would be appreciated”* while another stated *“Senior management and HR need to communicate faster and better”*. As previously stated in chapter 4.4 the accuracy and timeliness of a message increases its’ effectiveness (Rouse & Rouse, 2005).

One respondent indicated their desire to return onsite more regularly in order to *“plug in to the grapevine communications”*. Another respondent expressed that they would prefer *“Regular team newsletter email on what’s happening back in the office”*. These statements suggest that they may currently feel disconnected from the organisation while working offsite.

Interestingly, although figure 9 illustrates that a significant 88% feel fairly or fully informed in organisation X, the qualitative data suggests that several respondents are keen to hear more future plans with one respondent stating *“more information on organisation X’s pipeline and what possible projects are coming up”* and another *“It would be nice to hear more about what direction the company is planning on taking”*. This is something that management may have to address as it has been found that open senior management communication (Watson Wyatt, 2006) and employees being kept informed of activities are both key drivers of engagement (CIPD, 2006a).

4.5 Findings for objective 3

To determine whether engagement levels differ between employee categories

As SPSS does not provide an effect size statistic for Mann-Whitney Tests, the following calculation was used to calculate the approximate value of r .

$$r = z / \text{square root of } n \text{ where } n = \text{total number of cases}$$

(Pallant, 2011)

Table 1 Mann-Whitney Test to Test Engagement Differences Between Full and Part Time Respondents

Test Statistics ^a	
	TotalEEV2
Mann-Whitney U	1629.000
Wilcoxon W	30070.000
Z	-.140
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.889

A Mann-Whitney Test revealed no significant difference in the engagement scores of full time respondents ($Md = 62, n = 238$) and part time respondents ($Md = 60, n = 14$), $U = 1629, z = -.140, p = .889, r = -.082$. Therefore there is no statistically significant difference in the engagement score of full time respondents and part time respondents.

These results were surprising to the researcher as the Institute for Employment Studies (Robinson, et al., 2004) had found that full time workers were significantly more engaged than part time workers. However, the proportion of part time workers is very low in organisation X and therefore this may be one explanatory factor.

Table 2 Mann-Whitney Test to Test Engagement Differences Between Onsite and Offsite Respondents

Test Statistics^a

	TotalEEV2
Mann-Whitney U	6726.000
Wilcoxon W	12397.000
Z	-1.773
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.076

A Mann-Whitney Test revealed no significant difference in the engagement scores of onsite respondents ($Md = 62.5, n = 146$) and offsite respondents ($Md = 61, n = 106$), $U = 6726, z = -1.773, p = .076, r = -0.11$. Therefore there is no statistically significant difference in the engagement score of respondents working onsite and those working offsite. The researcher was also slightly surprised at this result considering some of the qualitative data that was gathered. Several respondents indicated that they were either unhappy with the environment of their client organisation or felt that they received less communication from organisation X because of their offsite location.

Table 3 Kruskal-Wallis Test to Test Engagement Differences Between Staff Grades

Test Statistics^{a,b}

	TotalEEV2
Chi-Square	14.874
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.001

A Kruskal-Wallis Test found that engagement levels differed significantly between staff grades; staff ($n = 179$), management ($n = 62$) and senior management ($n = 11$), $\chi^2(2, n = 252) = 14.87, p = .001$. Inspecting the mean ranks from the group suggests that senior

management have the highest engagement scores (mean rank = 203.86), with staff reporting the lowest (mean rank = 119.17). Senior management also recorded a higher median score ($Md = 70$) than the other two staff grades, management ($Md = 62$) and staff ($Md = 61$). This reaffirms findings from the Institute for Employment Studies research which indicated that managers and professionals have higher engagement levels than those at staff grade (Robinson, et al., 2004). In their study, senior managers were found to have the highest engagement levels (Robinson, et al., 2004), as is the case in organisation X.

Three Mann-Whitney Tests were then run to establish the difference in engagement levels between; staff and management, staff and senior management, and senior management and management. When comparing three groups, it is necessary to apply a Bonferroni adjustment to the alpha values to control for Type 1 errors (Pallant, 2011). This involves dividing the alpha number (0.05) by the number of tests that the researcher is using, in this case three Mann-Whitney Tests will be used to compare the groups (Pallant, 2011). This gives a stricter alpha level of 0.017.

A Mann-Whitney Test revealed no significant difference in the engagement scores of staff ($n = 179$) and management ($n = 62$), $U = 4889$, $z = -1.396$, $p = .163$, $r = -0.09$. Therefore there is no statistically significant difference in the engagement scores of staff and management. This was an unexpected finding to the researcher taking the findings from the Institute of Employment Studies into account which have been previously mentioned.

However, a Mann-Whitney Test found that engagement levels did differ significantly between senior management ($n = 11$) and staff ($n = 179$), $U = 332.5$, $z = -3.686$, $p = .000$, $r = -0.27$. The mean ranks for the group suggests that senior management have a much higher engagement score (mean rank = 154.77) than the staff grade (91.86). Using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = -0.27$ indicates a small effect.

Surprisingly, a Mann-Whitney Test also found that engagement levels differed significantly between senior management ($n = 11$) and management ($n = 62$), $U = 142$, z

= -3.072, $p = .002$, $r = -0.36$. Significantly senior management have a mean rank of 55.09 while management have a mean rank of 33.79. Again using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = -0.36$ indicates a medium effect meaning that there is a more significant difference of engagement levels between senior management and management than there is management and staff. The second Mann-Whitney Test confirms findings from the Institute of Employment Studies research that managers have higher engagement levels than those at staff grade (Robinson, et al., 2004). However it was surprising, from the third Mann-Whitney Test, to discover the extent to the significant difference between engagement levels of senior management and management. These significant differences may indicate that senior management need to place more importance on engaging both management and staff.

4.6 Findings for objective 4

To determine whether perceptions of organisational communication differ between employee categories

Table 4 Mann-Whitney Test to Test Perceived Communication Differences Between Full and Part Time Respondents

Test Statistics ^a	
	TotalCommsV2
Mann-Whitney U	1320.000
Wilcoxon W	1425.000
Z	-1.306
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.191

A Mann-Whitney Test revealed no significant difference in the perceived communication scores of full time respondents ($Md = 69$, $n = 238$) and part time respondents ($Md = 64$, $n = 14$), $U = 1320$, $z = -1.306$, $p = .191$, $r = -0.08$. Therefore

there is no statistically significant difference in the perceived communication score of full time respondents and part time respondents.

Table 5 Mann-Whitney Test to Test Perceived Communication Differences Between Onsite and Offsite Respondents

Test Statistics ^a	
	TotalCommsV2
Mann-Whitney U	5882.500
Wilcoxon W	11553.500
Z	-3.251
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.001

A Mann-Whitney Test revealed that there is a significant difference in the perceived communication scores of respondents working onsite ($Md = 70, n = 146$) and respondents working offsite ($Md = 67, n = 106$), $U = 5882, z = -3.251, p = .001, r = -.20$. Using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = -.20$ indicates just a small effect. However, this does reaffirm some of the qualitative data which indicates that employees who work offsite may feel disconnected from the organisation. This indicates that organisation X may need to address how communication can be improved for offsite workers.

Table 6 Kruskal-Wallis Test to Test Perceived Communication Differences Between Staff Grades

Test Statistics ^{a,b}	
	TotalCommsV2
Chi-Square	24.732
df	2
Asymp. Sig.	.000

A Kruskal-Wallis Test revealed a statistically significant difference in perceived communication levels across three different staff grades; staff ($n = 179$), management ($n = 62$) and senior management ($n = 11$), $\chi^2(2, n = 252) = 24.73, p = .000$. Inspecting the mean ranks from the group suggests that senior management have the highest perceived communication scores (mean rank = 228.59), with staff reporting the lowest (mean rank = 117.81). Senior management also recorded a higher median score ($Md = 83$) than the other two staff grades, staff ($Md = 68$) and management ($Md = 71$).

Three Mann-Whitney Tests were then run to establish the difference in perceived communication levels between; senior management and staff, management and staff, and senior management and management. As mentioned in section 4.5, when comparing each group with one another, it is necessary to apply a Bonferroni adjustment to the alpha values to control for Type 1 errors (Pallant, 2011). This gives a stricter alpha level of 0.017.

A Mann-Whitney Test revealed no significant difference in perceived communication levels of staff ($n = 179$) and management ($n = 62$), $U = 4852, z = -1.475, p = .140, r = -0.10$. Therefore there is no statistically significant difference in the engagement scores of staff and management.

A Mann-Whitney Test found that perceptions of communication differed significantly between senior management ($n = 11$) and staff ($n = 179$), $U = 125.5, z = -4.857, p = .000, r = -0.35$. Inspecting the mean ranks from the group suggests that senior management have a much higher perceived communication score (mean rank = 173.59) than the staff grade (90.70).

A Mann-Whitney Test also revealed that there is a significant difference in perceived communication levels of senior management ($n = 11$) and management ($n = 62$), $U = 77, z = -4.075, p = .000, r = -0.48$. Inspecting the mean ranks from the group suggests that senior management have a higher perceived communication score (mean rank = 61.00) than management (mean rank = 32.74). Using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = -0.48$ indicates an effect which is the very upper scale of medium.

These results indicate that organisation X may need to prioritise improving internal communication for those below senior management grade. Although it is a positive sign that senior management have such positive perceptions of communication, they also need to prioritise communication to and among other staff grades. As Ruck and Trainor (2011) concluded, employee engagement is not likely to improve until senior management consider internal communication more strongly. Watson Wyatt (2006) also suggest that communication from senior management is a more important engagement driver than many organisations consider. Many consider supervisor communication to be more important. However, if senior management do not stress the importance of internal communication to supervisors/team leaders and support them in their role as communicators, supervisor/team leader communication may not be as effective (Ruck & Trainor, 2011).

Some items on the communication scale replicate findings in the literature of key communication drivers of engagement. Some noteworthy figures; 100% of senior management strongly agreed with *“I understand how my role contributes to achieving business outcomes”* (question 11) while 53% of management and 42% of staff strongly agreed with the statement. In response to question 17 *“Management encourages me to talk openly and share ideas with my colleagues”*, 100% of senior management strongly agreed while 50% of management and 40% of staff strongly agreed. The highest proportions of disagreements came from the staff category. In response to question 21 *“How satisfied are you with the channels that exist to feed your views/issues/ideas upwards”*, 82% of senior management indicated very satisfied while 26% of management and 18% of staff indicated very satisfied. Again the highest proportion of those dissatisfied and very dissatisfied were those from the staff category.

4.7 Findings for objective 5

To establish whether employee's with positive perceptions of organisational communication have high engagement levels

Table 7 Spearman rho Correlation Between Perceived Communication and Engagement

		TotalEEV2	TotalCommsV2
Spearman's rho	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.804**
	TotalEEV2		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	252	252
	Correlation Coefficient	.804**	1.000
	TotalCommsV2		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	252	252

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The relationship between perceptions of communication (measured by TotalCommsV2) and engagement levels (measured by TotalEEV2) was investigated using Spearman rho correlation coefficient. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables, $r = .804$, $n = 252$, $p < .0005$, with high levels of perceived communication associated with high levels of engagement. This can indicate the higher the perception of communication, the higher the engagement level. To understand how much variance the two variables share, a coefficient of determination was calculated. This calculation gave a percentage of 64.64% meaning that perception of communication helps to explain almost 65% of the variance in respondents' scores on the engagement scale. Also, using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = 0.8$ indicates quite a large positive effect. This finding indicates that managers should be aware that by improving the current perceptions of communication in the organisation, engagement levels may also rise correspondingly.

The literature has suggested that the two key aspects of organisational communication which drive engagement are senior management communicating the vision, the future and important information of the organisation to all staff and secondly, employees having the opportunity to express their opinions and give upward feedback in the organisation. For this reason, the researcher chose to identify the items within the communication scale that represent these drivers and to use Spearman's rho correlation to determine if there is a significant relationship between these specific communication variables and engagement levels.

The relationship between question 12 "*I have a clear vision of where the organisation is going*" and engagement levels (measured by TotalEEV2) was investigated using Spearman rho correlation coefficient. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables, $r = .491$, $n = 252$, $p < .0005$. This may indicate that the higher the score in this question, the higher the engagement level. Using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = 0.49$ indicates a medium effect. This finding reaffirms Dr Mary Welch's (2011) conclusion that when effective internal communication is practiced, employees understand the values and vision of the organisation; this in turn enhances engagement as employees are engaged with the organisation's goals.

The relationship between question 30 "*Management keeps me informed about important issues and changes as they are happening*" and engagement levels (measured by TotalEEV2) was investigated using Spearman rho correlation coefficient. There was a strong, positive correlation between the two variables, $r = .554$, $n = 252$, $p < .0005$. This may indicate that the higher the score in this question, the higher the engagement level. Using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = 0.55$ indicates a large effect. This finding links to one of two key engagement drivers identified by the CIPD (2006a) which is that of employee's being kept informed of activities and changes in the organisation.

Finally, the relationship between question 21 "*How satisfied are you with the channels that exist to feed your views/issues/ideas upwards to management*" and engagement levels (measured by TotalEEV2) was investigated. Again, there was a strong, positive

correlation between the two variables, $r = .525$, $n = 252$, $p < .0005$. This may indicate that the higher the score in this question, the higher the engagement level. Using Cohen's (1988) criteria outlined in chapter 3.11, $r = 0.52$ indicates a large effect. The CIPD (2006a) and MacLeod and Clarke (2009) have both identified allowing employees the opportunity to feed their views and opinions upwards in their organisation as a key driver of engagement.

4.8 Conclusion

The main findings drawn from data analysis and discussion have been presented in this chapter. Chapter 5 will use these findings to draw overall conclusions and make recommendations.

5 Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusions

This research study set out to achieve a number of objectives as outlined in chapter 3.1. The topic of communication as a driver of employee engagement was reviewed by drawing on literature from both academics and industry practitioners. It was also outlined why it is in organisations interests to improve their internal communication as high employee engagement levels can bring about benefits for both organisations and individual employees. The research objectives were achieved through the analysis of quantitative and qualitative data gathered through the questionnaire. Conclusions will now be drawn in relation to each objective.

Objective 1: To identify the current employee engagement level in organisation X

Using the engagement scale for the purposes of this study, organisation X was found to have quite a high engagement score (3.1 out of a maximum possible 4.15).

It is evident that, how trustworthy employees consider senior management to be may be an issue in organisation X; as just 21% of respondents said that they always trust senior management. This may hinder employee engagement as senior management cannot effectively lead and engage employees unless employees trust them.

The qualitative data indicated that some employees feel that they are underutilised and that their role does not give them the opportunity to use their skills to their full potential which can disenable their ability to engage effectively in their role.

Objective 2: To establish employee's perceptions of communication in organisation X

Using the communication scale for the purposes of this study, organisation X was found to have quite high perceptions of communication (with a score of 3.26 out a maximum possible 4.05).

It is evident that a very high proportion of respondents are in 'all agreement' that they understand how their role contributes to achieving business outcomes (97%). It is equally evident that a high proportion of respondents are in 'all agreement' that they have a clear vision of where the organisation is going (93%). In addition to this, it is evident that the majority of respondents feel fully or fairly informed of what is happening in the organisation and can always or usually believe information.

However, it is concluded that timeliness of information can be an issue in organisation X as a very small proportion of respondents (17%) say they always receive information in a timely manner. The qualitative data reflects similar conclusions. When information is regularly communicated in an unpunctual manner, the message can become less effective which may lead to a decrease in those who always or usually believe information they receive from the organisation.

Although the majority of respondents feel that their manager is always open and honest with them, it is evident that many respondents are dissatisfied with the regularity of one-to-one meetings with their manager. Also, a quarter of all respondents indicated that their manager rarely or never gives them feedback on how they are performing. These findings conclude that employee-manager/team leader communications may need improvement so that feedback is given more often and on a regular one to one basis.

The qualitative data considerably stressed that employees are dissatisfied with the under- utilisation of the intranet system. This emphasises the need to encourage use of the intranet platform to communicate more often.

The frequency of team meetings also stood out, with many emphasising the desire to ensure they are more regular and mandatory for all employees. Most importantly, it is evident that some respondents feel that the quarterly briefing does not incorporate two-way communication. This must be addressed so that employees can have an input and be allowed to question managers in relation to it.

Concerns from offsite employees emerged from the qualitative data. It is evident that some feel disconnected from organisation X when working in the client organisation. This must be addressed through more frequent communication and updates.

Objective 3: To determine whether engagement levels differ between employee categories

It was concluded that engagement levels do not differ significantly between full time and part time employees and onsite and offsite employees.

However, engagement levels do differ significantly between staff grades. Specifically, it has been concluded that the senior management group are much more highly engaged than those at management level or below. This indicates that senior management need to place more importance on engaging both management and staff.

Objective 4: To determine whether perceptions of organisational communication differ between employee categories

It was concluded that perceptions of communication do not differ significantly between full time and part time employees.

However, it has been concluded that perceptions of communication do differ significantly between onsite and offsite respondents. Specifically, employees who work onsite in organisation X's offices have slightly higher perceptions of communication

than those who work offsite in a client organisation. This may be addressed through more frequent communication and updates.

It has also been concluded the senior management have much higher perceptions of communication than those at management level or below. This indicates that senior management need to stress the importance of effective internal communication to management grade and support managers in their role as communicators to staff. Engagement levels are unlikely to increase until this has been done (Watson Wyatt, 2006).

Objective 5: To establish whether employee's with positive perceptions of organisational communication have high engagement levels

It was found that there is a strong positive correlation between perceptions of communication and engagement. Therefore it is concluded that, in this study, those with high perceptions of communication are also likely to be highly engaged. It is evident from this research that the senior management group possesses both high perceptions of communication and high engagement levels. It is also evident that those in management have slightly lower scores in both scales and staff again have lower scores. This concludes that if organisation X focus on improving the effectiveness of their internal communications, specifically the areas which the findings address, engagement levels may also increase.

5.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are issued:

- **Intranet**

- Increased utilisation of the intranet to give information in a timely manner.
- A social interactive media platform built into the intranet where employees can exchange information and importantly those offsite can be kept updated on grapevine communications.

- **Employee – Manager/team leader Communications**

All employees to decide with their manager or team leader the frequency at which they would like to have one-to-one meetings. These meetings should also facilitate giving employees feedback on their performance.

- **Consultative Briefings**

A change from the current quarterly briefings which would allow all employees the opportunity to suggest topics for inclusion in the agenda. The briefing would be in a consultative fashion and all staff members would be given the opportunity to participate in a discussion of the agenda items. This would aid in the development of trust that employees place in senior management as; it would be clear that senior management value the suggestions and questions of their employees and this would create an inclusive style.

- **Internal Communication Policy**

- An assessment of the current policies on internal communications, in particular to ensure that the policies address those offsite in client organisations.
- A consultant facilitated communication workshop for senior management and management in the hope that both groups will consider internal communication more strongly. Additionally, it would be hoped

that senior management will then support and facilitate the management to become more effective communicators.

The above recommendations are based on the findings and outcomes of this particular research. The list is not exhaustive of all possibilities which may positively impact on employee engagement.

5.3 Limitations

The qualitative data gathered was simply in the form of open ended questions and therefore there was no opportunity to further probe or clarify any issues. On reflection, focus groups or interviews would have allowed the researcher to develop a deeper understanding of the issues in the organisation.

As previously mentioned, given the size and the industry of the organisation, it may not be possible to generalise the findings to other organisations.

Also, the calculations were carried out to determine if there was a correlation between the two variables being studied. However, different factors which may impact engagement levels were not included and could have been included in the study as extraneous variables. These are variables which may also be causing changes in the dependent variable, which would provide an alternative to the independent variable in the study (Saunders, et al., 2009).

5.4 Opportunities for further research

A longitudinal study conducted in the organisation with the same questionnaire would be an interesting way to analyse if engagement levels differ and if perceptions of communication differ when there are changes in economic climate (whether positive or negative) and therefore see if these seem to cause a shift in engagement levels.

An international study, including organisation X's non-domestic offices could also be conducted for the purposes of comparison and measurement.

In addition to this, if access was granted, the same research could be conducted in similar sized organisations in the same industry in Ireland for the purposes of comparison.

5.5 Personal Reflection

Although I found this dissertation challenging, it was extremely enjoyable and rewarding. I have learned a lot from undertaking this research, not only academically, but also about my ability to remain focused during a challenging process.

I feel that I need to become more critical of other authors and that I could develop my critical thinking ability further. Reflecting back, ideally, I would have also included some qualitative methods in the forms of focus groups or interviews. In advance of formulating and distributing the questionnaires, focus groups may have helped to develop my questionnaire further and to understand in-depth any issues which may exist within the organisation. Alternatively, after administering the questionnaires, I could have interviewed willing participants to get more detail on certain issues.

Finally, I think that my questionnaire was slightly too long. This was because I was concerned with gathering all of the data I needed for my analysis but now I realise I should have edited and shortened it. As well as this, I should have included several extraneous variables in the questionnaire which may have also been causing changes in the dependent variable.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Email Requesting Access

Date: Mon, 8 Apr 2013 17:55:01 +0100 (BST)

From: Jennifer Magill [REDACTED]

Subject: Jennifer Magill - HR Masters Research

To: "[REDACTED]" <[REDACTED]>

Dear [REDACTED],

I am [REDACTED] daughter; he forwarded me the below emailing after contacting [REDACTED] in relation to my master's research.

I appreciate you getting back to him and thought it might be easier to contact you myself.

As part of my masters in HR management (in the National college of Ireland) I am completing a dissertation and my topic of choice is employee engagement, more specifically looking at vertical communication between management and staff and the impact/influence of this on employee engagement levels.

I am currently looking for an organisation to conduct my research in. Rather than just looking for information in the area, (although I would be very grateful for this, if possible, as you mentioned below) I was hoping that you may be interested in allowing me to conduct my research in [REDACTED].

My research will involve two methods: questionnaires and several interviews. Participation of employees would be completely voluntary although I would hope for a high completion rate. I understand that this may seem time consuming but as I said participation in the questionnaires would be voluntary and just several interviews would be conducted with employees who wish to be involved.

If you are interested in allowing me to conduct this research in [REDACTED] or would like to discuss this further please do not hesitate to contact me by email or by phone on [REDACTED]

Thank you for taking the time to read my email and for considering my request. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards,
Jennifer Magill.

Appendix B: Covering Email with Questionnaire

I am a postgraduate student at the National College of Ireland. This questionnaire is part of a research dissertation to investigate employee communications and engagement levels in your organisation. Your responses are important in enabling me to obtain as full an understanding as possible of this issue.

Participation involves completing the anonymous questionnaire at the link below. The questionnaire should take you approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence and responses cannot be attributed to any one participant.


The answers from your questionnaire and others will be used as the main data set for my dissertation for my master's in Human Resource Management at the National College of Ireland.

I hope that you find completing the questionnaire enjoyable and I am very grateful for your participation. If you have any questions or would like further information please do not hesitate to contact me at [REDACTED]


Thank you for your help.


Kind regards,
Jennifer Magill


Appendix C: Questionnaire

 Q1


Background
Please indicate your gender?


Female 


Male 

 Q2


Please indicate your age?


18 - 24 

25 - 34 


35 - 44 


45 - 54 

55+ 

 Q3

Please indicate your contract type?

Contract 

Permanent 

Please indicate your status of employment?

- Full Time >
- Part Time >



Which employee category best describes you?

- Staff >
- Management (including team leader & manager roles) >
- Senior Management >



Please indicate how long you have been with [REDACTED]?

- < 1 year >
- Between 1 - 4 years >
- Between 5 - 10 years >
- 10+ years >

Please indicate if you are predominantly based onsite in [redacted] or offsite with a customer.

- Onsite ([redacted]) >
- Offsite (Customer site) >



Please indicate your [redacted] office? (regardless whether you are on or offsite)

- Dublin >
- Munster >
- Northern Ireland >



What Practice do you work in?

- [redacted] >
- [redacted] >
- Business Support (i.e. HR, Finance, Support Services & Admin) >
- Expert Services >
- Managed Services >
- Sales & Marketing >
- Service Delivery Management >

Clarity

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have a clear understanding of my job responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand how my role contributes to achieving business outcomes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I have a clear vision of where the organisation is going.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Information & Honesty

The information I receive from management is always accurate.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree



I receive information in a timely manner.

- Always Frequently Rarely Never

To what extent do you believe the information you receive about what is happening within your organisation?

- I can always believe it. [➤](#)
- I can usually believe it. [➤](#)
- I can believe it about half of the time. [➤](#)
- I can seldom believe it. [➤](#)
- I can never believe it. [➤](#)



Openness

How well informed do you feel about what is happening within your organisation?

- I feel fully informed. [➤](#)
- I feel fairly well informed. [➤](#)
- I receive only a limited amount of information. [➤](#)
- I get to hear very little about what goes on. [➤](#)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Management encourages me to talk openly and share ideas with my colleagues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am reluctant to take risks in case I make a mistake and will be blamed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management involves people in decisions that affect their roles or work environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can ask management any reasonable question and get a straight answer.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



How satisfied are you with the channels that exist to feed your views/issues/ideas upwards to management?

- Very Satisfied >
- Satisfied >
- Dissatisfied >
- Very Dissatisfied >

Communication with your Manager

	Always	Frequently	Rarely	Never
My manager/team leader is open & honest with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager/team leader is supportive of me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager/team leader provides me with the necessary information to do my job well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager/team leader consults with me on matters of importance to me in my role.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager/team leader listens to me if I have suggestions to make.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My manager/team leader gives me feedback on how I am performing.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Regularity of Communication

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
My manager /team leader holds regular 1:1's with me (at least 4 per quarter).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am satisfied with [redacted] Performance Management ethos & approach.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management keeps me informed about important issues and changes as they are happening.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Communication Channels

What channels of communication are used to give information and updates about the organisation? (Choose all that apply)

- General Meetings
- Team Meetings
- Email
- Newsletters
- Through the grapevine
- Other:



What channel of communication do you prefer to receive information through?



If the communication associated with your job could be changed in any way, please indicate how below.

Engagement & Satisfaction

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The work I do in my role is worthwhile.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel valued for the work that I do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My roles gives me the opportunity to use my skills to my full potential.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**On a scale of 1 - 5 (with 1 being totally satisfied), how satisfied are you in your current role?**

1 (totally satisfied)
 2
 3
 4
 5 (totally dissatisfied)



Separate

Motivation**On a scale of 1 - 5 (with 1 being extremely motivated), how motivated do you feel in your current role?**

1 (extremely motivated) >
 2 >
 3 >
 4 >
 5 (totally demotivated) >

Q26

List three words that best describe how you feel about coming to work?



Q27

There is someone at work who encourages my development.

- Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree



Separator

Q28

Fairness & Trust

Do you feel you are rewarded fairly compared with others in similar roles in other IT companies.

- Definitely Probably Probably Not Definitely Not

	Always	Frequently	Rarely	Never
I trust my colleagues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I trust my manager to look after my best interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I trust senior management to look after my best interests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am treated as a full member of the team regardless of my position .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Management deliver on their promises.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Work Life Balance

On a scale of 1 - 5 (with 1 being totally satisfied), how satisfied are you with the balance between work and your life outside work?

- 1 (totally satisfied)
 2
 3
 4
 5 (totally dissatisfied)



	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I feel [redacted] provides support to help me manage my work-life balance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I find it difficult to keep up with the demands of my job.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Separator

Loyalty & Commitment

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe I have a good future in this organisation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel proud to tell people that I work here.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I would recommend this organisation to a friend.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

How much loyalty would you say you feel towards your organisation as a whole?

- A lot >
- Some >
- Only a little >
- None >



I plan to continue my career with [REDACTED] for the next -

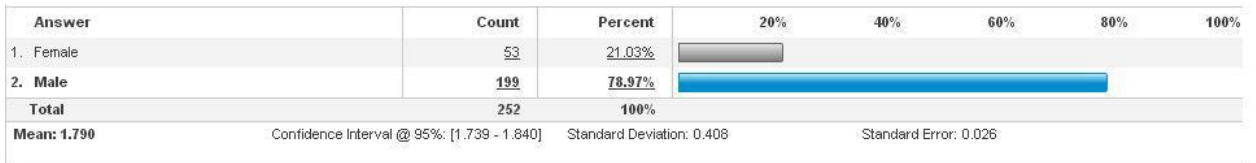
- < 1 year
- Between 1 and 2 years
- Between 3 and 4 years
- > 4 years

Appendix D: Overall Questionnaire Results

Part 1 – Demographic Information

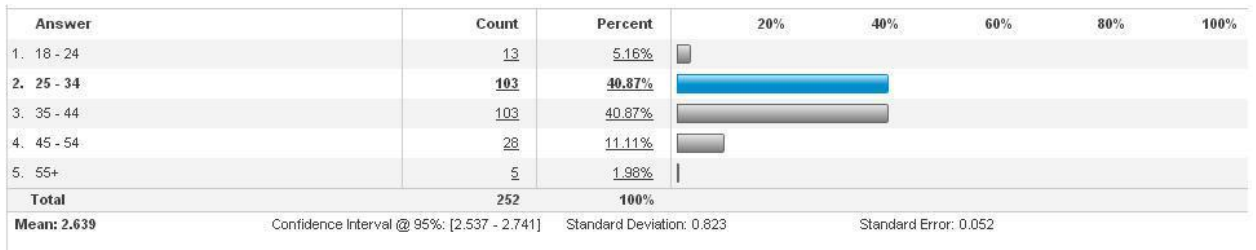
Question 1

Please indicate your gender?



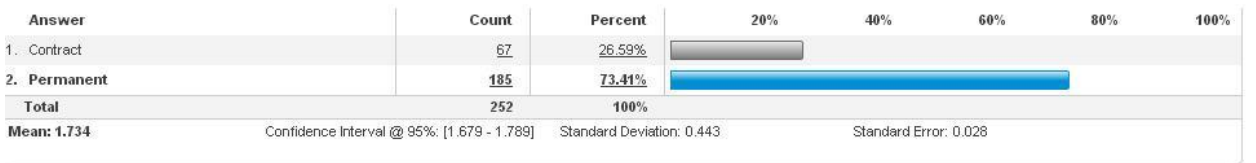
Question 2

Please indicate your age?



Question 3

Please indicate your contract type?



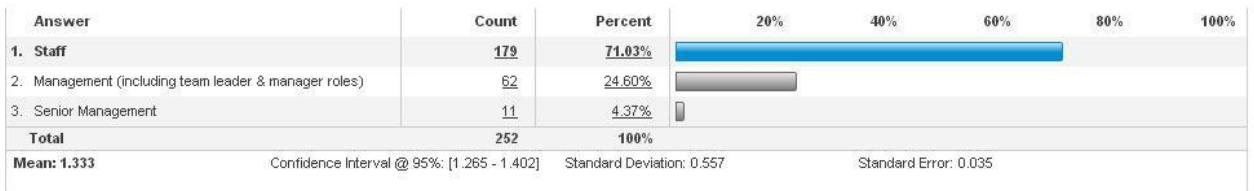
Question 4

Please indicate your status of employment?



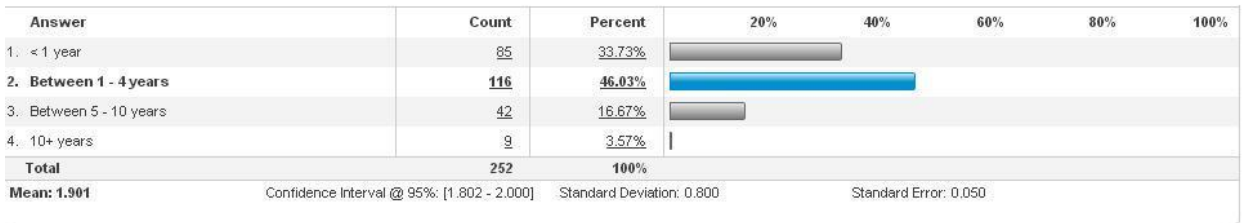
Question 5

Which employee category best describes you?



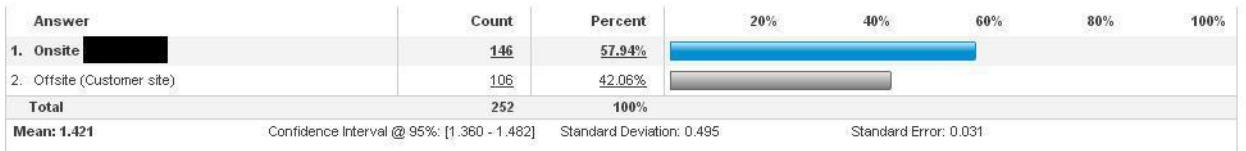
Question 6

Please indicate how long you have been with [REDACTED]



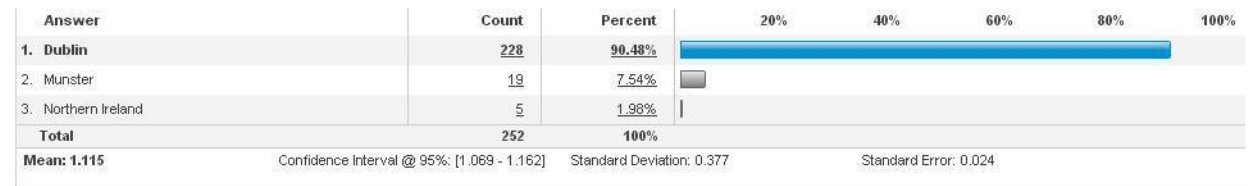
Question 7

Please indicate if you are predominantly based onsite in [REDACTED] or offsite with a customer.



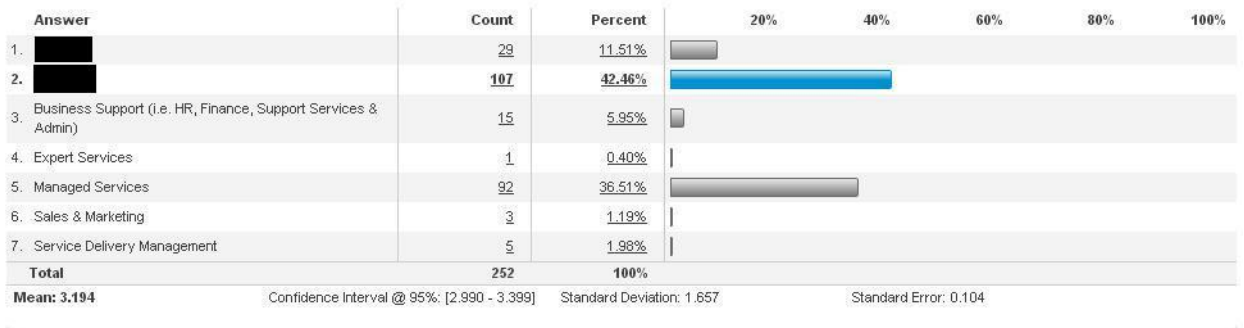
Question 8

Please indicate your [REDACTED] office? (regardless whether you are on or offsite)



Question 9

What Practice do you work in?

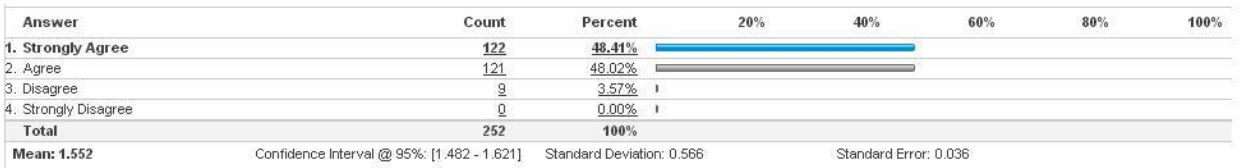


Part 2 – Communication

Clarity

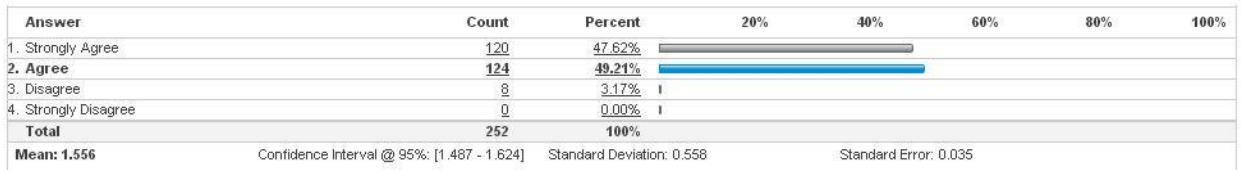
Question 10

I have a clear understanding of my job responsibilities.



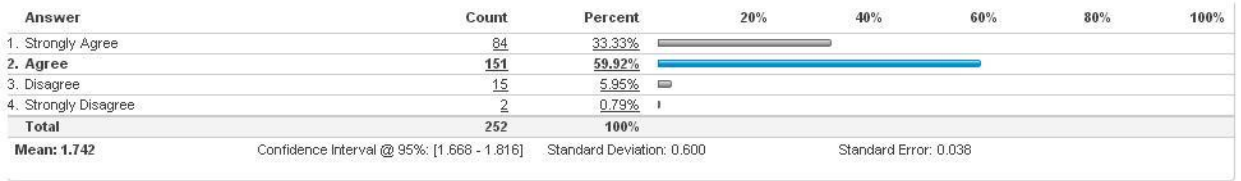
Question 11

I understand how my role contributes to achieving business outcomes.



Question 12

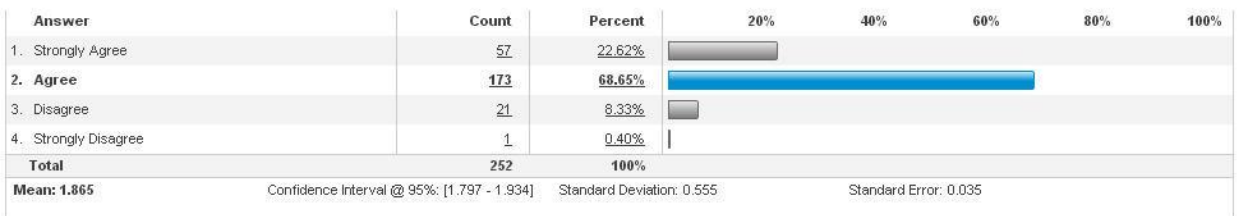
I have a clear vision of where the organisation is going.



Information & Honesty

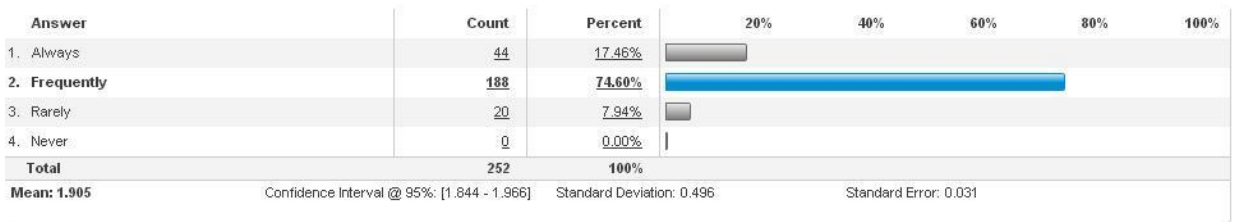
Question 13

The information I receive from management is always accurate.



Question 14

I receive information in a timely manner.



Question 15

To what extent do you believe the information you receive about what is happening within your organisation?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. I can always believe it.	109	43.25%					
2. I can usually believe it.	128	50.79%					
3. I can believe it about half of the time.	13	5.16%					
4. I can seldom believe it.	2	0.79%					
5. I can never believe it.	0	0.00%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.635 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.558 - 1.711] Standard Deviation: 0.620 Standard Error: 0.039							

Openness

Question 16

How well informed do you feel about what is happening within your organisation?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. I feel fully informed.	58	23.02%					
2. I feel fairly well informed.	163	64.68%					
3. I receive only a limited amount of information.	28	11.11%					
4. I get to hear very little about what goes on.	3	1.19%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.905 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.829 - 1.981] Standard Deviation: 0.618 Standard Error: 0.039							

Question 17

Management encourages me to talk openly and share ideas with my colleagues.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	114	45.24%					
2. Agree	131	51.98%					
3. Disagree	7	2.78%					
4. Strongly Disagree	0	0.00%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.575 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.508 - 1.643] Standard Deviation: 0.549 Standard Error: 0.035							

Question 18

I am reluctant to take risks in case I make a mistake and will be blamed.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	10	3.97%					
2. Agree	52	20.63%					
3. Disagree	154	61.11%					
4. Strongly Disagree	36	14.29%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.857 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [2.771 - 2.944] Standard Deviation: 0.700 Standard Error: 0.044							

Question 19

Management involves people in decisions that affect their roles or work environment.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	39	15.48%					
2. Agree	157	62.30%					
3. Disagree	49	19.44%					
4. Strongly Disagree	7	2.78%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.095	Confidence Interval @ 95%: [2.012 - 2.178]		Standard Deviation: 0.673		Standard Error: 0.042		

Question 20

I can ask management any reasonable question and get a straight answer.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	83	32.94%					
2. Agree	139	55.16%					
3. Disagree	26	10.32%					
4. Strongly Disagree	4	1.59%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.806	Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.722 - 1.889]		Standard Deviation: 0.678		Standard Error: 0.043		

Question 21

How satisfied are you with the channels that exist to feed your views/issues/ideas upwards to management?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Very Satisfied	57	22.62%					
2. Satisfied	166	65.87%					
3. Dissatisfied	26	10.32%					
4. Very Dissatisfied	3	1.19%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.901	Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.826 - 1.976]		Standard Deviation: 0.607		Standard Error: 0.038		

Communication with your Manager

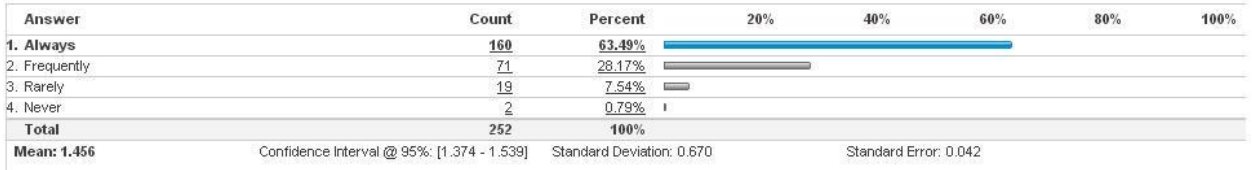
Question 22

My manager/team leader is open & honest with me.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Always	160	63.49%					
2. Frequently	81	32.14%					
3. Rarely	10	3.97%					
4. Never	1	0.40%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.413	Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.340 - 1.485]		Standard Deviation: 0.589		Standard Error: 0.037		

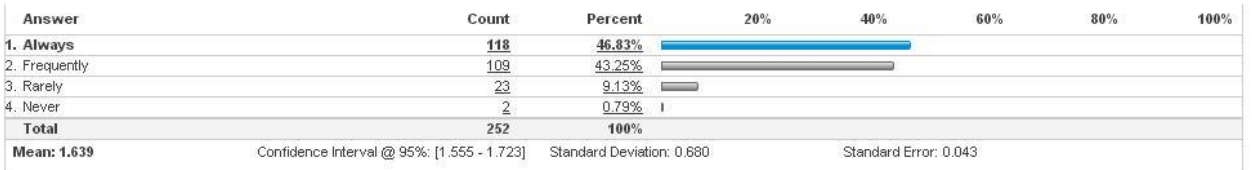
Question 23

My manager/team leader is supportive of me.



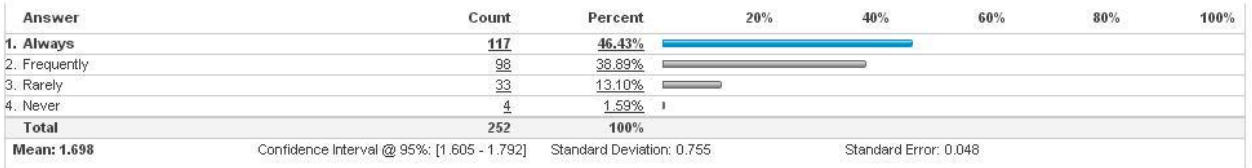
Question 24

My manager/team leader provides me with the necessary information to do my job well.



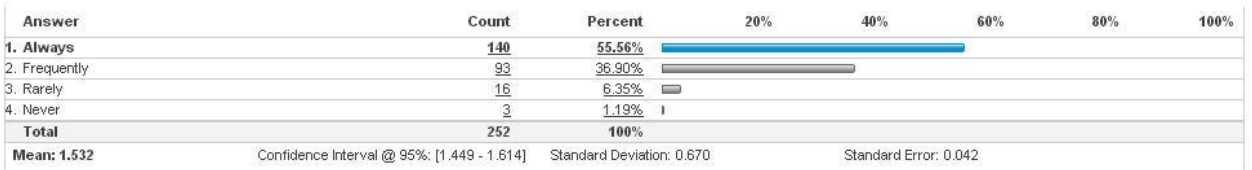
Question 25

My manager/team leader consults with me on matters of importance to me in my role.



Question 26

My manager/team leader listens to me if I have suggestions to make.



Question 27

My manager/team leader gives me feedback on how I am performing.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Always	101	40.08%					
2. Frequently	88	34.92%					
3. Rarely	55	21.83%					
4. Never	8	3.17%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.881 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.775 - 1.987] Standard Deviation: 0.857 Standard Error: 0.054							

Regularity of Communication

Question 28

My manager /team leader holds regular 1:1's with me (at least 4 per quarter).

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	57	26.59%					
2. Agree	84	33.33%					
3. Disagree	68	26.98%					
4. Strongly Disagree	33	13.10%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.266 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [2.143 - 2.389] Standard Deviation: 0.996 Standard Error: 0.063							

Question 29

I am satisfied with [REDACTED] Performance Management ethos & approach.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	57	22.62%					
2. Agree	133	52.78%					
3. Disagree	53	21.03%					
4. Strongly Disagree	9	3.57%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.056 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.962 - 2.149] Standard Deviation: 0.761 Standard Error: 0.048							

Question 30

Management keeps me informed about important issues and changes as they are happening.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	60	23.81%					
2. Agree	159	63.10%					
3. Disagree	30	11.90%					
4. Strongly Disagree	3	1.19%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.905 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.827 - 1.983] Standard Deviation: 0.630 Standard Error: 0.040							

Communication Channels

Question 31

What channels of communication are used to give information and updates about the organisation?
(Choose all that apply)

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. General Meetings	207	24.58%					
2. Team Meetings	190	22.57%					
3. Email	227	26.96%					
4. Newsletters	117	13.90%					
5. Through the grapevine	91	10.81%					
6. Other	10	1.19%					
Total	842	100%					
Mean: 2.673							
Confidence Interval @ 95%: [2.583 - 2.764] Standard Deviation: 1.335 Standard Error: 0.046							

N.B. Open-ended Questions 32 and 33 in Appendix E.

Part 3 - Engagement

Engagement and Satisfaction

Question 34

The work I do in my role is worthwhile.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	96	38.10%					
2. Agree	141	55.95%					
3. Disagree	11	4.37%					
4. Strongly Disagree	4	1.59%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.694							
Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.617 - 1.772] Standard Deviation: 0.630 Standard Error: 0.040							

Question 35

I feel valued for the work that I do.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	76	30.16%					
2. Agree	140	55.56%					
3. Disagree	33	13.10%					
4. Strongly Disagree	3	1.19%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.853							
Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.769 - 1.937] Standard Deviation: 0.679 Standard Error: 0.043							

Question 36

My roles gives me the opportunity to use my skills to my full potential.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	54	21.43%					
2. Agree	116	46.03%					
3. Disagree	66	26.19%					
4. Strongly Disagree	16	6.35%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.175	Confidence Interval @ 95%: [2.071 - 2.278]		Standard Deviation: 0.838		Standard Error: 0.053		

Question 37

On a scale of 1 - 5 (with 1 being totally satisfied), how satisfied are you in your current role?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. 1 (totally satisfied)	30	11.90%					
2. 2	102	40.48%					
3. 3	72	28.57%					
4. 4	37	14.68%					
5. 5 (totally dissatisfied)	11	4.37%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.591	Confidence Interval @ 95%: [2.465 - 2.717]		Standard Deviation: 1.020		Standard Error: 0.064		

Motivation

Question 38

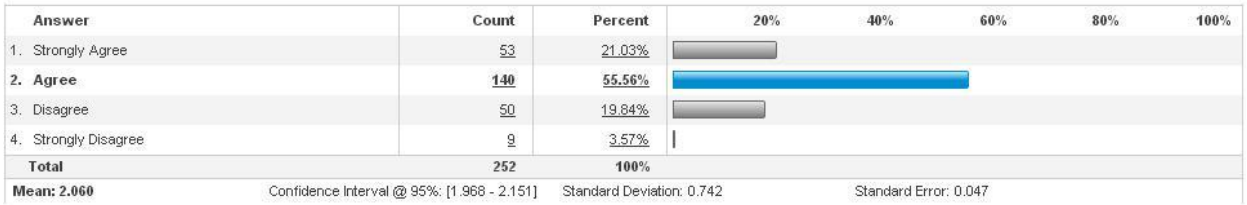
On a scale of 1 - 5 (with 1 being extremely motivated), how motivated do you feel in your current role?

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. 1 (extremely motivated)	48	19.05%					
2. 2	95	37.70%					
3. 3	75	29.76%					
4. 4	27	10.71%					
5. 5 (totally demotivated)	7	2.78%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.405	Confidence Interval @ 95%: [2.281 - 2.529]		Standard Deviation: 1.003		Standard Error: 0.063		

N.B. Open-ended Question 39 in Appendix E.

Question 40

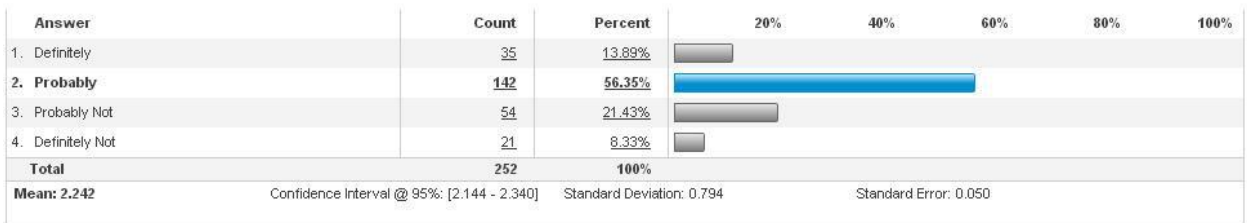
There is someone at work who encourages my development.



Fairness and Trust

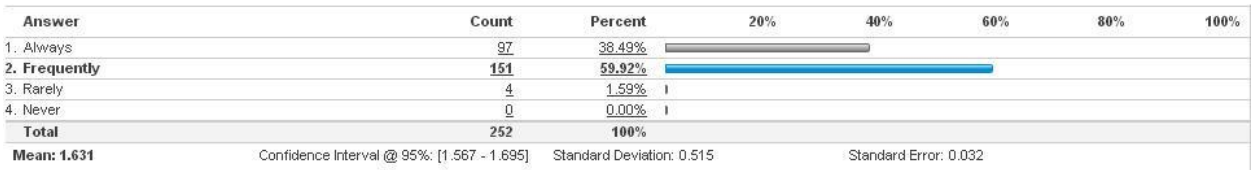
Question 41

Do you feel you are rewarded fairly compared with others in similar roles in other IT companies.



Question 42

I trust my colleagues.



Question 43

I trust my manager to look after my best interests.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Always	103	40.87%					
2. Frequently	121	48.02%					
3. Rarely	23	9.13%					
4. Never	5	1.98%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.722 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.635 - 1.810] Standard Deviation: 0.710 Standard Error: 0.045							

Question 44

I trust senior management to look after my best interests.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Always	52	20.63%					
2. Frequently	149	59.13%					
3. Rarely	43	17.06%					
4. Never	8	3.17%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 2.028 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.940 - 2.116] Standard Deviation: 0.711 Standard Error: 0.045							

Question 45

I am treated as a full member of the team regardless of my position .

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	120	47.62%					
2. Agree	114	45.24%					
3. Disagree	17	6.75%					
4. Strongly Disagree	1	0.40%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.599 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.521 - 1.677] Standard Deviation: 0.633 Standard Error: 0.040							

Question 46

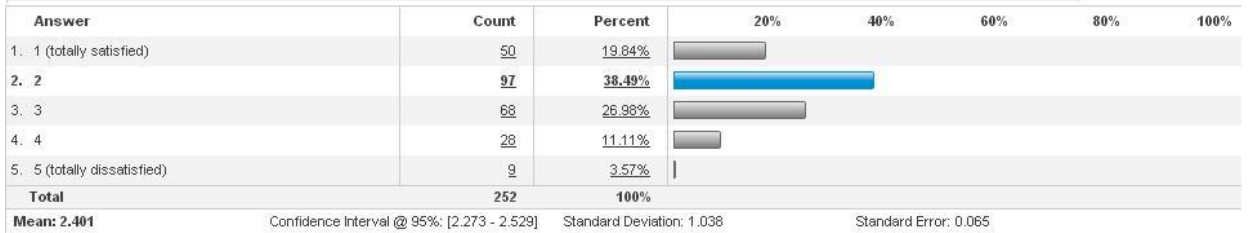
Management deliver on their promises.

Answer	Count	Percent	20%	40%	60%	80%	100%
1. Strongly Agree	56	22.22%					
2. Agree	160	63.49%					
3. Disagree	33	13.10%					
4. Strongly Disagree	3	1.19%					
Total	252	100%					
Mean: 1.933 Confidence Interval @ 95%: [1.855 - 2.010] Standard Deviation: 0.631 Standard Error: 0.040							

Work Life Balance

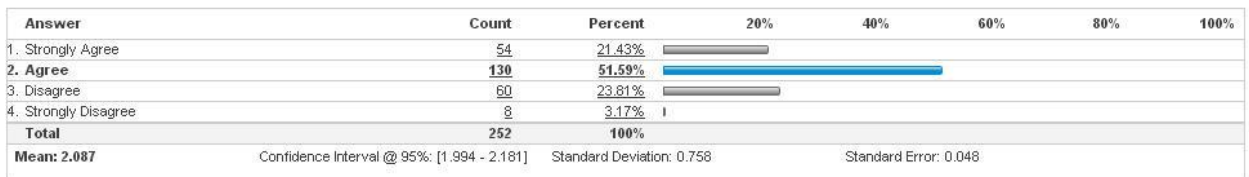
Question 47

On a scale of 1 - 5 (with 1 being totally satisfied), how satisfied are you with the balance between work and your life outside work?



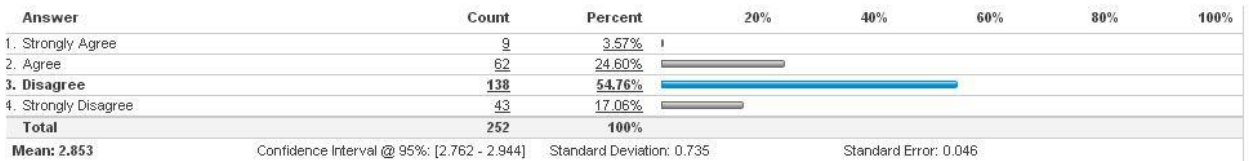
Question 48

I feel provides support to help me manage my work-life balance.



Question 49

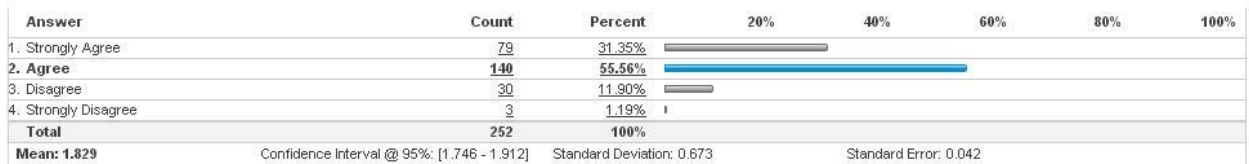
I find it difficult to keep up with the demands of my job.



Loyalty & Commitment

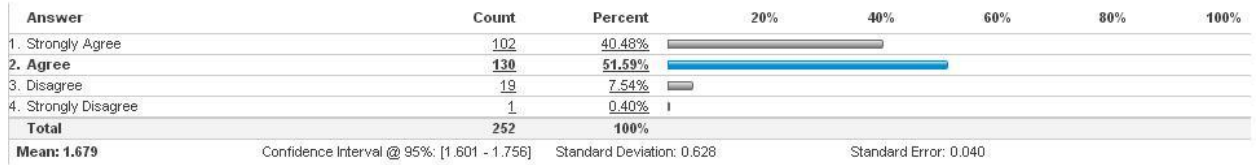
Question 50

I believe I have a good future in this organisation.



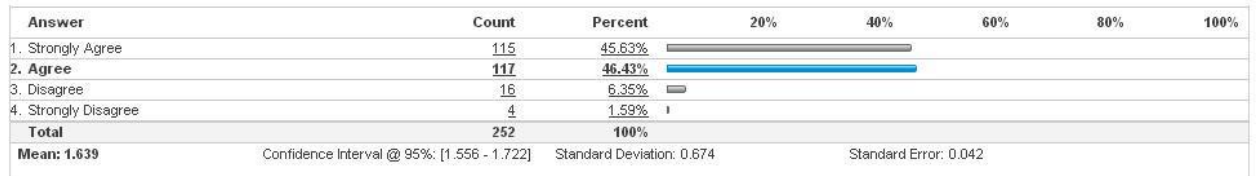
Question 51

I feel proud to tell people that I work here.



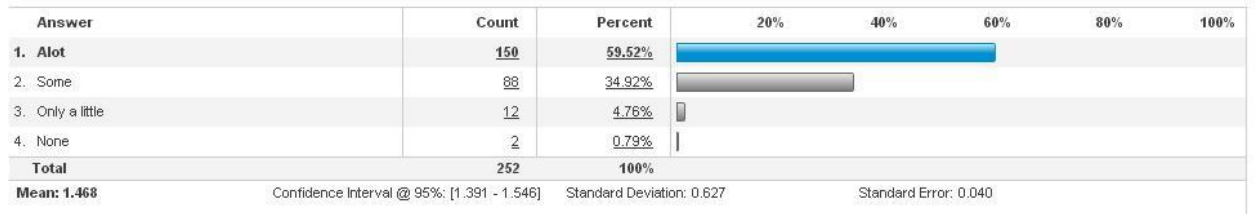
Question 52

I would recommend this organisation to a friend.



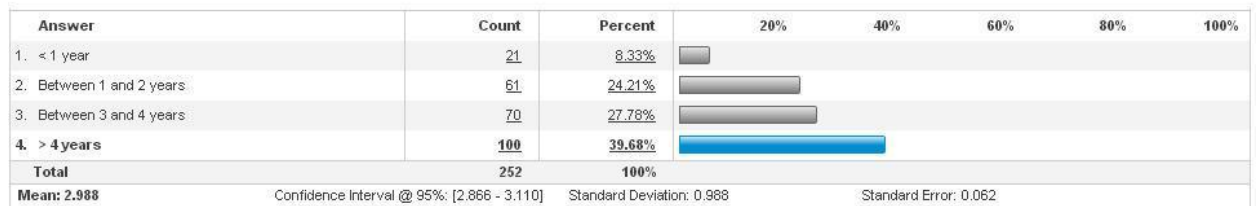
Question 53

How much loyalty would you say you feel towards your organisation as a whole?



Question 54

I plan to continue my career with [redacted] for the next -



Appendix E: Open Ended Question Results

Question 32

What channel of communication do you prefer to receive information through?	
<i>Answered Question</i>	247
<i>Skipped Question</i>	5
Response	Number of times response given
Email	111
Team Meetings	72
Unspecified Meetings	37
General Meetings	21
1:1's	12
Newsletters	11
Face to face	8
A combination of the above	4
Depends on the information being communicated	3
Intranet	2
Quarterly Meetings	1
Via phone	1
The "Weekly News" Emails	1
Given distributed nature, e-mail is the most reliable although under other circumstances face to face would be better.	1
Email but face to face is best.	1
Depends on the communication: email or newsletters are fine for uncontroversial factual updates. Organisational/structural changes, significant process changes etc. are probably better communicated through meetings of some kind, since there are likely to be questions.	1

All communication is good. The nature of information changes by channel e.g. newsletter more about employee success, family; GMs more about "organisation".	1
Multiple to ensure the message makes it to everyone.	1
Team meetings are a more informal approach and accommodating to open feedback.	1
No real preference, but would prefer meeting than in writing if it's a big announcement.	1
Depending on the nature of the information it differs. Important company information is good in general meetings or team meetings	1
I would like to see the intranet used more for internal communications	1
I believe a variety of channels are required to ensure effective communication	1

Question 33

If the communication associated with your job could be changed in any way, please indicate how below.	
<i>Answered Question</i>	209
<i>Skipped Question</i>	43
General Area	Response Given
No Change Needed	No change needed
	Happy with the level and nature of communication
	I am very happy with the communication associated with my job
	I feel the communication methods are well set, and very effective
Intranet & Email	Better communication via intranet
	Better use of the intranet
	Stronger intranet
	Improved intranet
	Delivery via Web Portal – Intranet Updates
	Better intranet – with weekly or even daily updates perhaps including staff input/updates?
	Some kind of corporate social network. The 'corporate facebook'
	Regular team newsletter email on what's happening back in the office

Meetings	Town hall meetings
	More regular team meetings
	More team meetings (at least fortnightly)
	Team meetings should be mandatory
	I think team meetings should be mandatory every week.
	Maybe weekly project updates
	Handover meetings & communication between individual teams
	Central point (proper SP site) in conjunction with the team and general update meetings.
	I cannot attend meetings on Thursday afternoon and for some strange reasons most of them are scheduled for that day.
1:1's	More regular 1:1's
	Prefer personal communications (1:1, meetings) over electronic messages
Speed of Communication	Could be quicker ie. arrive before the grapevine
	Timely responses/updates would be appreciated
	Senior management and HR need to communicate faster and better
Communication of future plans	More information on Organisation X pipeline and what's possible projects are coming up
	It would be nice to hear more about what directions the company is planning on taking
	More medium and long term plans – what will be happening in the future
Changes to quarterly briefing	Divisional briefings instead of the quarterly briefing, which is a waste of time.
	The main channel of companywide communication in Organisation X is the quarterly briefing which is fine and does what it says, however, there is no opportunity either prior/during these briefings for staff to raise questions/topics etc. that they may wish to discuss. It's very much a one-way communication style – it should be opened up so that staff can have input into the briefing agenda and/or be allowed to raise questions over items raised during the briefing.

CPD	More overall clarity on CPD and how it works in Off-Site engagements
	Communication about my capability/career path/performance review methods is non-existent. Clarity about how the CPD works, how careers can be managed and how performance is measured would help. More training sessions in this area would be of benefit.
Working off site	More phone calls as I am off site
	Those off site need to be given better opportunities to be back in the office so that they can plug in to the "grape vine" communications.
Interaction	I would like to be involved in some way to the decision before the communication is made
	Less high level, more related to what people are working on, more interaction. <u>less powerpoint.</u>
	Feedback/ideas given to direct managers are not always acted on or properly considered. I would prefer a clear way to escalate feedback to beyond immediate management where their response is not adequate.

Openness	More visibility.
	More informal chats.
	Give the bigger picture rather than just describing the problem/issue.
Miscellaneous	Less "long" emails
	Communication using <u>lync, skype, etc</u>
	Be more specific to my roll and project I am working on
	Improve automated e-mails coming from <u>LanDesk</u> ; support teamwork by making community of practice mailing list live – share your ideas more often and receive feedback more often; clarify where to throw ideas to approach the most appropriate people, encourage feedback and incremental problem solution
	Communications could be more open- and more coordinated. Updates about Organisation X are usually via the <u>grapevine</u> , and senior managers do not talk to "normal" members of staff (i.e. non managers). It comes across as very cliquy. Since arriving I've had more engagement with 'my client organisation' than Organisation X. Organisation X obviously has a clear sense of identity but it's very difficult to feel part of that as a new starter. Organisation X's principles don't seem to be embedded in 'my client organisation'. We should aim to perform better as a team that brings with it best practice, whereas instead there seems to be a <u>nervousness</u> about taking a step back and reflect on how Organisation X might help to do things differently and better.
	I do not have enough experience of the company to adequately answer this.

Question 39

List three words that best describe how you feel about coming to work.		
<i>Answered Question</i>		157
<i>Skipped Question</i>		95
Positive Language	Neutral Language	Negative Language
Agreeable	A bit repetitive	Apathy
Achieving	Acceptable	Ambiguous
Appreciative	Ambivalent	Annoyed
Calm	Anxious	At times overwhelmed
Comfortable	Apprehensive	Becoming more unmotivated
Committed	As an experienced contractor I recognise the benefits, and the faults. Liaison on the contractual side of my employment is where Organisation X fall short.	Bombarded
Confident	Assured	Bored
Content	At ease	Broke
Continuous Improvement	Aware	Captive
Dedicated	Busy	Clueless
Driven	Cautious	Concerned
Dynamic	Challenged	Demanding
Eager	Challenging	Demotivated
Energetic	Communication	Depressed
Energised	Constantly challenged	Disappointed
Engaged	Curious	Disengaged
Engaging	Depended	Disheartened
Enjoyable	Desire to improve	<u>Disillusioned</u>
Enjoyment	Determined	Disinterest
Enthused	Development	Dispirited
Enthusiastic	Duty	Dread
Excited	Early	Exhausted
Excitement	Educate	Frustrated
Focused	Evolving	Listless
Fulfilled	Full of anticipation	Passive
Glad	Future	Pressured
Good	Here's another ticket	Resigned
Grateful	Hoping	Reticent
Great	Hungry	Scary
Happiness	I feel that there is a challenging	Sleepy

	day ahead of me but it will be rewarding.	
Happy	Involved in using a skill that I worked hard to perfect.	Stagnant
Hopeful	It depends on the workload that day, sometimes it's dread, sometimes it's grand.	Stress
Interested	Just another day	Stressed
Look forward to challenges of the day	Knowledge	Stressful
Lucky	Learn	Subdued
Make a difference	Learning	Time-wasting
Mostly happy	Loyalty	Tired
Motivated	Necessity	Trapped
Motivation	Normal	Unappreciated
Needed	Ok	Under pressure
Optimistic	Open	Under utilised
Positive	Planning	Underused
Privileged	Potential	Unenthusiastic
Proactive	Predictable	Unfulfilled
Productive	Ready	Uninterested
Progressing	Responsible	Worn-out
Proud	Results	
Relatively happy	Routine	
Relaxed	Self-motivated	
Rewarding	Solutions	
Safe	Steps	
Satisfaction	Sunday evening dread (Not Organisation X's fault, client environment is the issue)	
Satisfied	Sure it's alright	
Secure	Tickets	
Supported	Travel	
Thankful	Uncertain	
Upbeat	Uncertainty	
Valued	Unfazed	
Willing	Unknown	
Worthwhile	Wary	
	Work to live	