

# Employee engagement dependent upon conditions created by employer

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In a new article in *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, William H. Macey and Benjamin Schneider examine the meaning of employee engagement, which they view as leading to unusually effective employee behavior with subsequent reflection in organizational success. Employee engagement refers to the positive feelings employees have about their job as well as the motivation and effort they put into their work.

The authors contend that employees will feel – and act - engaged when their employer creates conditions that permit them to do so. The key condition for feeling engaged is fair treatment, which creates a feeling of trust and, in turn, feeling safe to be engaged.

Some people confuse engagement with satisfaction and/or commitment and consider retention and turnover to be indicators of engagement. However, Macey and Schneider's view of employee engagement concerns both feelings of engagement (focus and enthusiasm) and engagement behavior (proactivity and persistence).

Engagement is not synonymous with satisfaction. Engagement connotes energy and not satiation, while satisfaction connotes satiation and contentment but not energy. Employees come to work ready to be engaged, and the challenge for organizations is to create conditions that will release that energy.

"Our framework places an emphasis on the management of human resources in ways that respect the energy people bring to the work place,

and it puts the responsibility on management to create the conditions for employee engagement," the authors conclude. "Management is responsible for creating the conditions at work that will facilitate employee engagement."

This article is accompanied by a set of 13 commentaries taking differing positions on the issue.

Source: Wiley-Blackwell

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