# Improving Employee Engagement

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*Abstract—* **Employees are one of determinants to bring a company reaches the goals. In working, happiness and satisfaction are not enough to create best outcomes. Employee might be happy and satisfy in works, but it is possible that they are not productive. Employee should give something, which is not only limited in the contract, called engagement. PT. Suwanda Karya Mandiri (PT. SKM) is one of private-owned company as a consultant engineering in Indonesia operated in Bandung, West Java. High turnover and less responsibility in this company make the engagement of employee questionable. This research combines three theories of employee engagement from The Institute for Employment Studies (IES) Engagement Model and American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) Theory as drivers of employee engagement, and The People Metric Theory as a form of employee engagement.**

*Keywords—— employee engagement, IES Engagement Model, ASTD Theory, The People Metric Theory, PT. Suwanda Karya Mandiri*

## I. Introduction

Company's growth can be affected by two factors, internal and external. Those factors give pressure to company to develop. Before facing the external factor, company should prepare the internal factor first. One component of internal factor which company should pay attention is employees. Employees are important asset of a company and it means, without employees a company will not work. Engagement means the commitment that is had by employee. When the employee become emotionally engaged they will create a sense of fairness and trust and positive working condition. According to Engage for Success (2013), employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organization's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being. It is not easy for a company to create an engagement in employees. Moreover, the engagement should be well understood by each employee.

This far, number of private-owned companies become growing due to overwhelming interest of the self-employed to set up its own company. PT. Suwanda Karya Mandiri (PT. SKM) is one of private-owned company as a consultant engineering in Indonesia operated in Bandung, West Java. Established on February 10th, 1996, PT. SKM is operated in survey mapping, planning, and supervision with thirty employees specialized in planning technicalities, administration, finance, and IT.

Employee engagement is being concerned in PT. SKM because of several reasons in the condition of employee. First, the new employee from fresh graduate when enters the company, for average they will stand for one year then out for searching the new job in other companies. It makes the company has new employee in periodically one up to three years. Second, they have less responsibility in doing job and it looked from the result and time of accomplishment. Often, much the content of documents is revised and retreated from the timeline so it causes the delay for entering the tender period. This is one reason that high possibility in making failure to take a project. Third, the condition of the CEO who has less time in the office because of high intensity of being outside in doing job, makes the management and control of the employee is poor. The poor management and control have strong relation with the cause of job accomplishment.

## II. Theory Basis of Employee Engagement

Truss et al (2009) define employee engagement as "Engagement is about creating opportunities for employees to connect with their colleagues, managers, and wider organization. It is also about creating an environment where employees are motivated to want to connect with their work and really care about doing a good job. It is a concept which places flexibility, change, and continuous improvement at the heart of what it means to be an employee and an employer in a twenty first century workplace". Engagement is not only creating employee commitment to the company, but also environment to support the employee responsible with the job.

According to Dvir et al (2004), engagement behaviorally defined as a "high level of activity, initiative, and responsibility". Engaged employee have a strong balance in activity, initiative, and responsibility. These three aspects shall be a baseline for employees. May et al (2004), found that meaningfulness, safety, and availability were significantly related to engagement. They also found job enrichment and role fit to be positive predictors of meaningfulness, rewarding co-worker and supportive supervisor relations were positive predictors of safety, and resource were a positive predictor of psychological availability. Positive predictors represent measurement to support meaningfulness, safety, and availability.

Furthermore, the Gallup Organization defines engaged employees as those who, "work with a passion and feel a

profound connection to their company" and "drive innovation and move the organization forward" (GMJ, 2006).

Therefore, employee engagement can be summarized as how the employees creating themselves and environment in workplace so that they will commit to their organization to produce good outcomes and move the organization forward.

Based on Gallup Organization (Gallup Study, n.d.), there are three types of employees; engaged, not engaged, and actively disengaged. The engaged employees have a passion in working condition, so they not only take responsibility in accomplishing their job, but also initiative in taking the job so the engagement supports the employees give their best performance to drive best outcome for the company. They really care and feel involved to their company. They drive the innovation and move the organization forward. Not engaged employee will just focus on accomplishing their job. They tend to feel that the important thing to do is finishing the job then they feel they have fulfilled their responsibility without concerning about giving best performance. One condition that can make not engaged employee is the lost control from the supervisor. Employees who actively disengaged represent that they aren't just unhappy at work but also busy acting out their unhappiness. This type of employee will let the company facing problem from internal then affecting on external, which is the performance of the company and their growth.

# III. The Conceptual Model

The conceptual model for employee engagement in this research is according to The Institute for Employment Studies (IES) Engagement Model and American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) Theory as drivers of employee engagement and The People Metric Theory as a form of employee engagement. According to The Institute for Employment Studies (IES) Engagement Model, there are ten drivers of employee engagement. They are training, development, & career, immediate management, performance & appraisal, communication, equal opportunities & fair treatment, pay & benefits, healthy & safety, cooperation, family friendliness, and job satisfaction. American Society for Training & Development (ASTD) Theory has ten drivers of employee engagement, which are good relationship between employees & immediate supervisor, a sense that employee opinion count, opportunities to excel, resources needed to get work done, good relationship with co-workers, clear communication organization wide, career development opportunities, individual & organizational alignment, good relationship between employees & top leaders, recognition and rewards. According to The People Metric Theory, there are four outcomes of employee engagement, which are retention, effort, advocacy, and passion. Retention represents intending to stay with current employer. A company will have high level of turnover if they can't retain their employees. More important is retaining the employee, which has best performance and quality. Management of a company should create a good work environment to make the employees stay. Good working environment can be socialized by embed

harmony in all working activities. Effort means willing to go above and beyond for internal and external customer. For a company, effort means how much employees willing to expand best effort and ability in every job. An employee who feels engaged will be motivated by the working environment to give best effort for their company. In other means, employees already consider themselves as a part of a company that needs pay attention to the success of a company in accordance with the expected. Advocacy means an employee will recommend their employer to others. Employees who want to recommend others, they have feel that their workplace is great. Internally, they will support each other in doing a job and externally they will attract another people to work for the company. An employee who loves and feels proud working in a company means they already have passion with the company. A form of proud can be an attribute usage from the company, management system, led by people who inspire the employee, and etc. Passion in each employee will make a harmony in working environment. From both theories, the drivers will be modified into conceptual model of employee engagement. The modified drivers are formed because they have same coverage area in the meaning. In conclusion, there are fifteen drivers of employee engagement as independent variables, which can be seen in Table 1.

TABLE I. THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

| Modified Driver |
|---|
| A sense that employee opinion count |
| Recognition and rewards |
| Training and development opportunities |
| Equal opportunities and fair treatment |
| Opportunities to excel |
| Cooperation |
| Communication |
| Good relationship |
| Family friendliness |
| Immediate management |
| Pay and benefits |
| Performance and appraisal |
| Healthy and safety |
| Resources needed to get work done right |
| Individual and organizational goal alignment |

# IV. The Drivers Relation to The Employee Engagement

The fifteen drivers of employee engagement, as independent variables, will be grouped by Factor Analysis into several big factors. According to Factor Analysis calculation, two variables are excluded, consisted of immediate

management and resources needed to get work done, and then remains thirteen drivers to be grouped. There are four factors generated from the calculation. The first factor consists of cooperation, communication, good relationship, performance & appraisal, and healthy & safety, hereinafter named working environment factor. Second factor consists of recognition & rewards, training & development opportunities, and opportunities to excel, named performance improvement factor. The third consists of a sense that employee opinion count and family friendliness, named personal interest factor. Last factor consists of pay & benefits, individual & organizational goal alignment, and equal opportunities, named organizational system factor. The values from each factor is incorporated into the calculation of Multivariate Linear Regression and give the result on the equation that only two factors, which is working environment and performance improvement factor, have influence to a form of employee engagement in this company. Furthermore, the variables from both factors, which have less value should be concerned to be improved. There are five variables, which have to be improved, which are recognition & rewards, opportunities to excel, cooperation, communication, and performance & appraisal. Those variables are chosen because have big gap with the three remains.

## V.  **Conclusion**

The less value variables, which are recognition & rewards, opportunities to excel, cooperation, communication, and performance & appraisal, represent employees of PT. SKM feel there are lack of recognition and rewards after done a job, opportunities to improve personal performance to be competent in excel, and fair appraisal in accordance with the performance that affect their engagement to the company. In the other side, there is unclear communication in some information given and less cooperative in working process. Giving more control and pay attention to the employees can build better management system by creating the better working environment in order to increase their employee's performance, such as communicating and cooperating well to make harmony and give recognition and reward directly to their employees to make them feel what is being done in accordance with what is expected and can be appreciated.

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"Employee might be **happy** and **satisfy** in works, but it is possible that they are **not productive** Kruse, K. (2012, June 22)**.**"