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## Employee Support System as a Factor for Increased Staff Retention

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**Abstract:** Employee support system plays a vital role in staff retention in today's competitive job market. This paper aims to explore the relationship between employee support systems and staff retention. The study examines the factors that make up employee support systems and how they influence staff retention. The paper reviewed employee support system with focus on the work environment and management attitude toward employees who on their own volition want to enhance their skills in their career path. The findings reveal that a robust employee support system that caters to the needs and welfare of staff, including health, work-life balance, career development, and job security, enhances employee satisfaction and loyalty to the organization. The paper concludes that employee support systems are essential in attracting and retaining top talent, and organizations need to invest in such systems to increase staff retention rates, reduce turnover costs, and foster a productive work environment.

**Keywords:** Employee support system, turnover, retention, career goals

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The connection between organizations and their employees has shifted dramatically in recent years. Employees nowadays expect more from their jobs and their employers (Folan & Mitchell, 2003). They want to do something more significant with their profession while also receiving something other than money in exchange for their time and effort. Building a more devoted workforce has become a commercial imperative as organizations have begun to recognize that their most precious assets are their people (Maza, 2001).

The employee support system refers to the different methods employed by businesses to help their employees fulfill their fundamental requirements beyond their regular pay, thereby increasing their productivity and loyalty to the company. This includes fostering a positive organizational culture, offering valuable perks, maintaining a suitable work environment, aligning the employees with the company's mission and values, providing necessary equipment and technical assistance, facilitating training and development, allowing flexible working hours, and enabling career

growth opportunities for employees (Lopez et al; 2017). Macey, W.H & Schneider B. (2008) posited that having a robust employee support system is essential for attracting, motivating, and retaining employees. Employers must recognize the individuality of their workers to develop customized support systems that cater to their specific needs.

Studies show that employees value opportunities to progress as a crucial component in staying with their employer. Lucida (2022) opines that investing in staff means employers are committed to their professional development and potential to advance to more senior roles within the organization. This feeds into a positive cycle of belonging, motivation, productivity, and, eventually, retention. Supporting learning promotes employee growth and career prospects while also communicating to employees that they are valued and respected by the organization (Kraimer et al., 2011). Developing organizational learning techniques such as fostering external engagement, experimentation, and error tolerance develop a culture of performance improvement and fosters behaviors that aid in the

achievement of organizational goals (Camps and Rodriguez, 2011). Workers who perceive that their employer has provided them with adequate support tend to perform better than those who feel that the support they receive is insufficient (Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Increased performance involves stronger affiliation and loyalty, conscientiousness in carrying out job obligations, and inventiveness on behalf of the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1990). While greater competence may be viewed as a potential to advance in another organization, individuals tend to remain loyal to employers that have trusted and invested in them (Maurer and Lippstreu, 2008; Camps and Rodriguez, 2011). This paper examines employers' support system towards employee knowledge advancement in their career path as a factor for increased retention for increased organizational outcomes.

## **2. EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SYSTEM**

### **2.1. Meaning and Scope**

The employee support system encompasses the various ways that organizations provide assistance and support to their employees beyond their salaries to help them meet their basic needs and enhance their well-being. It includes policies, practices, and programs that promote a positive work environment, align employees with the company's values and mission, and facilitate employee development and growth. The scope of employee support systems includes a wide range of programs and initiatives that may vary depending on the organization's culture and goals. These may include offering competitive benefits such as health insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, and employee discounts. Additionally, organizations may provide training and development opportunities, performance coaching, and mentoring programs to help employees build skills and advance in their careers. Moreover, the scope of employee support systems extends beyond the workplace to encompass employees' personal lives. Many organizations offer counseling services, wellness initiatives, and employee assistance programs to help employees manage personal and family issues that may affect their job performance and well-being.

Research has shown that a robust employee support system can lead to increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity (Lopez-Cabrales et al., 2017). Furthermore, it can help organizations attract and retain top talent (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

### **2.2. Types of Employee Support System**

Employee support systems refer to a range of programs, practices, and policies that organizations use to support their employees. The following are some common types of employee support systems:

1. **Health and wellness support:** Many organizations provide their employees with health and wellness programs that aim to promote physical and mental well-being. This may include access to gym facilities, mental health counseling, and health insurance.
2. **Work-life balance support:** Work-life balance initiatives are designed to help employees balance their personal and professional responsibilities. This may include flexible work arrangements, telecommuting, and parental leave policies.
3. **Employee development support:** Employee development support programs help employees to enhance their skills, knowledge, and career growth. This may include training and development programs, mentoring, and coaching.
4. **Financial support:** Financial support programs aim to help employees manage their finances effectively. This may include retirement plans, tuition reimbursement, and financial counseling.
5. **Employee assistance programs (EAPs):** EAPs provide employees with confidential counseling services and support for personal and work-related issues. These programs may include legal and financial counseling, substance abuse treatment, and stress management.

Research has shown that a robust employee support system encourages employee growth and lead to increased employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity (Lopez-

Cabrales et al., 2017). Furthermore, it can help organizations attract and retain top talent (Macey & Schneider, 2008).

### 3. STEPS IN DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A SUSTAINABLE EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SYSTEM

Designing and implementing a sustainable employee support system requires careful planning and consideration of the organization's culture and goals (Grossman, R. J. (2017). The following are some steps that organizations can take to create a sustainable employee support system:

1. Conduct a needs assessment: Organizations should assess the needs of their employees to determine the types of support programs and initiatives that are most relevant and effective. This can be done through surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews.
2. Develop a clear strategy and goals: Organizations should develop a clear strategy and goals for their employee support system. This may include identifying the types of programs and initiatives to be implemented, setting objectives for each program, and establishing performance metrics to measure success.
3. Involve employees in the design process: Employees should be involved in the design and development of the support system. This helps to ensure that the programs and initiatives are relevant, meaningful, and effective.
4. Obtain leadership buy-in: The support of organizational leadership is critical to the success of the employee support system. Leaders should be involved in the design and implementation process and should communicate the importance of the support system to employees.
5. Implement the support system: Once the design is complete, organizations should implement the support system. This may involve training employees on new programs, communicating the availability of support services, and creating a system

for employees to access the support they need.

6. Evaluate and refine the system: Organizations should regularly evaluate the effectiveness of their employee support system and make adjustments as needed. This can be done through surveys, focus groups, and ongoing feedback from employees.

### 4. BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE SUPPORT SYSTEM

Supporting employees' career development can provide numerous benefits for both the employee and the organization. Some of these benefits include:

1. **Increased employee engagement and job satisfaction:** By creating more opportunities for personal development, employers are showing employees that their personal development is just as vital to the business as their productivity even if the skills acquired aren't immediately applicable to job performance. Gallup. (2018) noted that when employees feel that they have opportunities for career growth and development, they are more likely to be engaged and satisfied with their jobs.
2. **Improved retention:** The more money a business spends on employee training and development, the more concerned management is that highly competent employees will quit and take their expertise with them. Nevertheless, research has shown that employee training actually reduces turnover and absenteeism (SHRM, 2016). By offering opportunities for career development, organizations can retain their top talent and reduce turnover rates.
3. **Enhanced skills and knowledge:** A company's long-term success can be greatly impacted by having highly skilled staff. Through development, employees are able to identify some inherent hidden potential and utilize them for the benefit of the organization. Supporting career development can help employees acquire new skills and knowledge that can be applied to their current jobs and future positions.
4. **Better succession planning:** Identifying the crucial positions in the organization and creating action plans for people to fill them is

the process of succession planning. This kind of planning, which takes a comprehensive approach to present and long-term objectives, guarantees that you have the right people in the right positions both now and in the future. Developing employees' skills and knowledge can prepare them for future leadership positions within the organization.

5. **Improved organizational performance:** Employees who have opportunities for career development can contribute to the overall success of the organization by bringing new ideas, skills, and perspectives (Aguinis, H., & Kraiger, K., 2009).

## 5. CONCLUSION

A good employee support system helps organization achieve its mission, execute its strategy and generate important business results. For this reason, it is important that the HR designs policies on employee support systems and creates a culture and an environment that supports smooth implementation. Supporting employees' development helps built committed and engaged staff and develops skills set for future succession and increase staff retention.

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