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Here's how employees' experience can be enhanced during lockdown

Now, what can organizations do to enhance the work-from-home employee experience? Here are a few suggestions by the expert



Here's how employee can experience be enhanced during lockdown

Employee experience is the overall journey of an employee at an organization. This experience is a cumulative impact of the organization's physical environment, work-life balance and technology. The COVID-19 pandemic has redefined the way we work and has created a “new normal” work environment.

Experts at Gartner surveyed around 800 global HR executives and reported that 88% of organizations are encouraging their employees to work from home over 2020-2021, regardless of whether they have coronavirus-related symptoms. Now, each employee will be working from home, using technology, which makes it more challenging for organizations to maintain employee experience. Work from home is not a new concept but now we are forced to do certain things without choice to stay relevant in the changing world.

We have technological sophistication in place; now, the challenge is to dig deeper into acquiring new skills, changing mindsets and being more innovative to make the best use of the available technology. Many businesses must plan to implement the entire employee experience, including the entry-to-exit processes, through technology platforms, while keeping in mind their strategic goals. Organizations are finding new ways to support employees, to increase their engagement and create a more agile workforce.

How should organizations design employee experience?

Given most companies have adopted remote working, it is important for them to really consider employee experience, in a manner similar to customer experience design. In fact, employee experience is an overlooked area, which has only gained attention due to the changing nature of work. Similar to a customer experience journey, employee experience journey isn't linear and there are times when the employee can feel lost. Now, in addition to self-responsibility, companies must enhance the employee experience by providing an engaging work environment. Designing employee experience must be similar to the strategies used for customer experience. For example, we can begin with a needs-based segmentation (Yohn, D.L., 2016) to cluster employees based on their work demands, employees' drives and desires.

Is upskilling the need of the hour?

With many Edu-tech players such as Udemy and Simplilearn offering self-learning courses and most institutions offering webinars, it has become crucial for us to adapt ourselves, in order to allow a smooth transition into a post-COVID digital world. According to a survey by LinkedIn on the 'Workforce Confidence Index', sixty-four per cent of employees have shown willingness to upskill themselves and reinvent their competences, as is suitable for businesses. Some employers such as Marico and ITC are carefully redesigning their learning modules to benefit their employees. The new

learning tracks which they have introduced include leading with resilience, decision-making in crisis situations and leading employees with empathy, in addition to employee well-being plans.

Now, work-from-home employees don't physically interact with the organization environment, have no informal chats with colleagues and no coffee breaks. As a matter of fact, for most, work and home have merged together. Now, what can organizations do to enhance the work-from-home employee experience?

Here are a few suggestions by the expert Dr Shameem S, Assistant Professor, Human Resource Management and Organizational Behaviour, Great Lakes Institute of Management, Chennai:

- Regular communication is the key to enhancing the employee experience.
- Conducting frequent pulse surveys to capture the feelings and emotions of the employees working from home. Make it more interactive!
- Informal video chats/meetings among the team members to increase the sense of belongingness.
- Discussion forums to understand the needs of employees and suggest ways to handle crises.
- Share information about the happenings in the organizations on a regular basis.
- Immediate recognition for any work achievement done by employees by sending appreciation emails.
- Supporting the employees' family members by conducting wellness-related programs.
- Providing basic furniture, a laptop and paying internet bills can help the employees and boost their productivity.
- Offer career growth opportunities and make learning a continuous engagement process.
- Empower the employees and encourage knowledge-sharing using the appropriate communication tools.