

Evidence-Based Employee Morale and Engagement Practices in Public Health: *Literature Review*

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1.

Ye, Jiali, Verma, P., Leeps, C., Kronstadt, J. (2018). Public Health Employees' Perception of Workplace Environment and Job Satisfaction: *The Role of Local Health Departments' Engagement in Accreditation*. *Journal of Public Health Management & Practice*. Vol. 24, No 3; S72-S79. doi: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000000581.

Summary: Researchers examined the association between engagement in accreditation and staffs' perception of workplace environment and job satisfaction and local health departments in the United States. Workforce environment was measured through perceived supervisory support, organizational support, and employee engagement. Satisfaction overall was also measured.

Employees who were formally engaged in the accreditation process gave higher ratings to all categories. The agencies' engagement in accreditation was associated with higher scores. Accreditation status was also marginally associated with job satisfaction.

2.

Pourshaban, D., Basurto-Davila, R., Shih, M. (2015). Building and Sustaining Strong Public Health Agencies: Determinants of Workforce Turnover. *Journal of Public Health Management & Practice*. 21, S80-S90. DOI: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000000311.

Summary: Voluntary turnover can result in agencies losing expertise and can be expensive for companies. A study was conducted to determine factors in employee turnover. The strongest predictors of turnover were pay and job satisfaction.

Low employee satisfaction due to pay is associated with years of experience and education level. Morale was directly associated with opportunities to apply talents and expertise, feeling inspired to meet my goals at work, and feeling involved in their work. Being treated with respect and support for employee development were also included. Job satisfaction was not associated with work life balance, leadership roles, or learning for coworkers.

3.

Eldor, L., Vigoda-Gadot, E. (2017). The nature of employee engagement: rethinking the employee-Organization relationship. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*. Vol 28, No.3; Pgs. 526-552. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1180312>.

Summary: Employee engagement, defined as a work-related state of "feelings of vigor, fulfillment, enthusiasm, absorption, and dedication." Findings demonstrate that employee engagement is distinct from both psychological empowerment and contract for work overall.

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4.

Albrecht, S., Breidahl, E. and Marty, A. (2018). Organizational resources, organizational engagement climate, and employee engagement. *Career Development International*. Vol. 23 No. 1; pgs. 67-85. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/CDI-04-2017-0064>.

Summary: Six organizational resources were proposed to be associated with employee engagement, (defined as a “positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication and absorption” that “encompasses a willingness to work toward the successful achievement”). The six organizational resources included perceptions about HR practices, senior leadership, clarity of organizational goals, organizational adaptivity, strategic alignment, and organizational autonomy. Recommendations include HR transparency, alignment of work objectives and strategic priorities, “that the future direction of the organization is clearly communicated”, that organizations are flexible and open to changes, and that employees have the ability to participate in decisions.

5.

Beer, L, Stander, F., & Stander, M. (2015). Authentic Leadership as a Source of Optimism, Trust in the Organization and Work Engagement in the Public Health Care Sector. *SA Journal of Human Resources Management*. Vol 13, Issue 1; Pgs. 1-12. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v13i1.675>.

Summary: Authentic leadership in the public health field is associated with a high level of employee optimism and trust. Authentic leadership is defined as “being absolutely true to one’s own being” by inspiring others, motivating and stimulating employees, including on an intellectual level, and giving individual attention to each employee. Although there is no direct evidence, it is expected that optimistic employees will be more engaged.

6.

Castrucci, M., Harper, E., Leider, J., Sellers, K., & Won Shon, J. (2016). Job Satisfaction and Expected turnover Among Federal, State, and Local Public Health Practitioners. *AJPH Policy*. Vol 106 No. 10, pgs. 1-7. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2016.303305.

Summary: The public health field is expected to experience high levels of turnover. Pay satisfaction, organizational support, and employee involvement correlates with job satisfaction. Although employees may like their job, dissatisfaction with pay is associated with seeking a new position. More educated, younger, and more diverse staff were more likely to plan on leaving their current position. Most employees felt that pay satisfaction impacted employee involvements in addition to the organizational support as well. This article also highlighted previous research showing an association between unions and job retention.

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7.

N.A. (N.D.). Employee Engagement in the Public Sector: A Narrative Evidence Synthesis.

Summary: Motivational features of jobs including autonomy, social support, leadership consideration, and a pleasant work environment are key factors of engagement.

8.

Mason, P. (2018). Clackamas County Public Health: Employee Engagement in Quality Improvement and Performance Management Activities. *Wolters Kluwer Health, Inc.* Pgs. 1-3. DOI: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000000705

Summary: This case report of a local health department looks at engaging staff members all across the organization using performance management tools. Lessons learned related to engagement include focusing on sustainable long term work rather than deadlines, and prioritizing meaningful activities with short term gains to engage staff and encourage buy in.

9.

Bogaert, K., Castrucci, B., Leider, J., Sellers, K., & Whang, C. (2019). Considering Leaving, But Deciding to Stay: A Longitudinal Analysis of Intent to Leave in Public Health. *JPHMP*. Vol 25 No. 2; pgs. 9-85. DOI: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000000928.

Summary: This longitudinal analysis demonstrated that while pay satisfaction remains a significant predictor of employee turnover, changes in organizational and supervisory support can improve retention of employees that are planning to leave. Several efforts supervisors can initiate are assigning more responsibility or implementing professional development plans, and improving the workplace environment to reward creativity and innovation, engage in effective communication, prioritize training, and treat employees with respect.

10.

Bharthapudi, K., Castrucci, M., Harper, E., & Sellers, K. (2015). Job Satisfaction: A Critical, Understudied Facet of Workforce Development in Public Health. *Journal of Public Health Management and Practice*. Pg. 46-55. DOI: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000000928.

Summary: In this cross-sectional study employee, satisfaction was assessed. Improved job satisfactions was improved increased focus on training efforts with additional supervisory support leading to enhanced overall employment satisfaction. Organizational support overall also resulted in increased job satisfaction amongst employees.

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11.

Barthapudi, K., Leider, J., Liss-Levison, R., & Sellers, K. (2015). Loving and Leaving Public Health: Predictors of Intentions to Quit Among State Health Agency Workers. *J Public Health Management Practice*. Vol 21; Pgs. 91-101. DOI: 10.1097/PHH.0000000000000317.

Summary: Workplace environment, the job characteristics, and job satisfaction are controllable factors predictive of retention. Employee engagement and perceptions of organizational support increase job satisfaction. The length of service is also associated with an employees intention to leave.

12. Mamdani, K., & Minhaj, S. (2016). Effects of Motivational Incentives on Employees Performance: A Case Study of Banks of Karachi, Pakistan. *South East Asia Journal of Contemporary Business, Economics, and Law*. Vol 9, No. 2; Pgs. 1-8.

Summary: This case study reviewed the impact that incentives have on employees based on their work performance. Motivational incentives has a positive impact on employee performance and grew their commitment, morale and loyalty. Monetary incentives also increased performance and productivity, and reduced turnover. However, even with incentives, employees were willing to leave for a better opportunity.

13.

Daniel, T., & Metcalf, G. (2005, May). The Fundamentals of Employee Recognition. Pgs. 1-7.

Summary: There is a link between noncash awards and incentives and improved job performance. A strong award system aligns with the strategic plan of the organization, is sincere, and meaningful to the individual receiving it. The program should be adaptable for different employee's preferences (time off, money, etc.). Awards can be used to reinforce behavior, but need to be timely.

14.

Norris, J.M., White, D.E., Nowell, L., Mrklas, K., Stelfox, H.T. (2017). How to stakeholders from multiple hierarchal levels of a large provincial health system define engagement? A qualitative study. *Implementation Science*. 12:98. DOI 10.1186/s13012-017-0625-5.

Summary: Stakeholder engagement was defined, however lessons learned can be applied to other workforce engagement. Engagement was defined as active participation ranging from information sharing to full decision making, shared decision making process about meaningful changes for all, and interactions that begin early in the change process. Overall, engagement was represented by an active, committed decision making process where everyone felt heard.

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15.

Gatenby, M., Kular, S., Rees, C., Soane, E., & Truss, K. (2008, October). Employee Engagement: A Literature Review. Kingston Business School, Kingston University. ISBN No. 1-872058-39-6/978-1-872058-39-9/9781872058399.

Summary: Key drivers of employee engagement include communication, opportunities to contribute their point of view to leadership, and feeling managers are engaged. Employee engagement is relative to personal emotional wellbeing, which is reflected in overall job satisfaction. If an employee isn't emotionally happy, their probability of their job performance will more than likely be decreased. Employees who are very engaged while at work often times feel very positive about the organization they're employed by. Addressing issues as they arise will not only make the employee want to be more active within the community, but also decrease the turnover and recruitment costs.

Evidence suggested the longer employees are retained, the less their engagement.

16.

Woodruffe, C. (2006, January). Employee Engagement- The Real Secret of Winning a Crucial Edge over Your Rivals. *Resource Magazine*. Retrieved from www.resourcemagazine.co.uk.

Summary: This article suggests that keeping your employees fully engaged within the organization leads to retention. Key motivators include the opportunity for advancement, autonomy, civilized treatment, commitment by employers to employees, pleasant environment, exposure to senior staff, praise when due, support from other staff, and the feeling of being challenged. Additionally employees want to feel trusted, like their organization is good and reliable, they are doing useful work, and work-life balance is respected.

17.

Vance, R. (2006). Employee Engagement and Commitment- A Guide to Understanding, Measuring, Increasing Engagement in Your Organization.

Summary: This article suggests that employees who demonstrate that they are engaged in their organization serve as crucial components in the workforce. When employees demonstrate their willingness and commitment to their work and the organization, job satisfaction remains very high, therefore retention of employees are high as well. Managers can demonstrate reciprocity and increase both commitment and engagement by making jobs meaningful, tasks diverse, supporting autonomy, and providing peer support. They can also provide opportunities for personal development, which leads to more self efficacy, self esteem, and commitment.

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Aligning goals with strategic objectives, and providing recognition can also improve engagement.

18.

Thorston, P. (2003, October). Successful management by motivation- balancing intrinsic and extrinsic incentives. *Schmalenback Business Review*. 55,4; pg. 342.

Summary: This article reviews a book on the value of incentives. The book articles that performance related pay reduces intrinsic motivation, however when coupled with other efforts, extrinsic motivation has value. However there is evidence financial incentives may lead to rising participation, but not high value engagement or ideas. How an employee will react to different types of incentives varies based on their personality, and includes 5 types of people- income maximizers, status seekers, loyalists, formalists, and autonomists.

19.

Baehr, M.E., Renck, R. (N.D.). The Definition and Measurement of Employee Morale. *Administrative Science Quarterly*.

Summary: The hierarchy of needs should be considered when determining if payment is a factor in engagement. When pay is higher, new needs such as self-actualization become dominant, but these needs are eclipsed when financial security is threatened.

20.

McKnight, D.H., Ahmad, S., Schroeder, R.G. (2001). When do feedback, incentive control, and autonomy improve morale? The importance of employee management relationship closeness. *Journal of Managerial Issues*. Vol 8, No. 4; pgs. 466-482.

Summary: Incentive control, feedback, and autonomy only affected morale when accompanied by a close relationship with the supervisor and employee. There is evidence superior/subordinate relationship closeness is associated with morale on its own.