

2017

Strategies Used to Retain Talent in the Insurance Industry

Jamie Edward King
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>

 Part of the [Business Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Management and Technology

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Jamie King

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Jill Murray, Committee Chairperson, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Tim Truitt, Committee Member, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Dr. Peter Anthony, University Reviewer, Doctor of Business Administration Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2017

Abstract

Strategies Used to Retain Talent in the Insurance Industry

by

Jamie Edward King

BS, Miami University, 2004

MBA, Indiana Wesleyan University, 2009

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2017

Abstract

Employee engagement levels are critical to organizations that desire to retain a workforce that innovates, produces positive results, and stays committed to the organization. The purpose of this single case study was to explore employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent. The conceptual framework that guided this study was Deci's self-determination theory. Data collection occurred through semistructured interviews with four participants within the insurance industry having three or more years of management experience and having a positive reputation for engaging employees. The participating company is located in central Indiana. Participants answered 10 open-ended questions related to employee engagement and retention of talent. Data were transcribed and coded to identify themes. The modified van Kaam method was used for analysis of the data. Open and honest communication between managers and employees, managers looking beyond words to recognize disengagement and respectful and a caring leadership team at all levels of the company were amongst the prominent themes identified during data analysis. The study findings may contribute to business practices positively by increasing the understanding of the importance of employee engagement strategies in a work setting as well as how engagement levels affect retention. The study findings may contribute to social change by providing leaders ideas on how to provide greater job satisfaction to employees, which could translate into improved professional and personal lives by providing employees a greater feeling of fulfillment and confidence with their job.

Strategies Used to Retain Talent in the Insurance Industry

by

Jamie Edward King

BS, Miami University, 2004

MBA, Indiana Wesleyan University, 2009

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

December 2016

Dedication

I want to dedicate this work to my mom and all my family and friends that have supported me throughout my career and education. Special thanks to my cousin who was the true inspiration for me to go after my doctorate degree.

Acknowledgments

I am very grateful for the students and staff at Walden University that have traveled this journey with me for all their support. I appreciate Dr. Jill Murray, my chair, for her continued support and help in completing this study. Also, I want to thank Dr. Jody-Kay Peterson for her emotional support which helped me stay focused on the goal of completing this program.

Table of Contents

Section 1: Foundation of the Study.....	1
Background of the Problem	1
Problem Statement	2
Purpose Statement.....	3
Nature of the Study	3
Research Question	5
Interview Questions	5
Conceptual Framework.....	6
Operational Definitions.....	7
Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations.....	8
Assumptions.....	8
Limitations	8
Delimitations.....	9
Significance of the Study	9
A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature.....	10
The Impact of Employee Engagement.....	11
Employee Empowerment.....	15
Employee Turnover	17
Employee Development.....	18
Leadership Styles	20
Autocratic Leadership.....	22

Laissez-faire Leadership	23
Transformational Leadership	24
Servant Leadership.....	26
Transactional Leadership	28
Participative Leadership.....	29
Execution Strategy	30
Autonomy	32
Communication.....	33
Organizational Commitment.....	36
Transition	38
Section 2: The Project.....	40
Purpose Statement.....	40
Role of the Researcher	41
Participants.....	42
Research Method and Design	44
Research Method	44
Research Design.....	45
Population and Sampling	46
Ethical Research.....	47
Data Collection Instruments	48
Data Collection Technique	49
Data Organization Technique	50

Data Analysis	51
Reliability and Validity.....	52
Reliability.....	52
Validity	53
Transition and Summary.....	55
Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change	56
Overview of Study	56
Presentation of the Findings.....	57
Interview Questions	58
Interview Question 1.....	58
Interview Question 2.....	60
Interview Question 3.....	61
Interview Question 4.....	64
Interview Question 5.....	65
Interview Question 6.....	68
Interview Question 7.....	70
Interview Question 8.....	71
Interview Question 9.....	73
Interview Question 10.....	75
Employee Survey	75
Theme Development.....	76
Connecting the Findings to the Literature	77

Theme 1: Job fit can impact engagement	79
Theme 2: Open and honest communication.....	81
Theme 3: Looking beyond words to recognize disengagement.....	82
Theme 4: Lack of formal employee engagement training	82
Theme 5: Respectful and caring leadership	83
Applications to Professional Practice	85
Implications for Social Change.....	86
Recommendations for Action	87
Recommendations for Further Research.....	88
Reflections	89
Conclusion	90
References.....	91
Appendix A: Interview Questions	119

Section 1: Foundation of the Study

Kahn (1990) introduced the term employee engagement as a way to conceptualize the physical, cognitive, and emotional connection an employee has to their job.

Engagement levels of an individual affect organizational commitment, performance, motivation, trust, and energy levels of that employee (Smitha, 2013). In addition, the level of engagement of an entire workforce can affect perceptions of the organization, recruitment, retention, and eventually the profitability of the organization (Jauhari, Sehgal, & Sehgal, 2013).

In order to retain talent, organizations need to build a workforce of engaged employees that are committed to the organization and to do so they must aspire to address employees' psychological needs and not simply contemplate their financial needs (Burns, 1978; Kahn, 1990; Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Levels of engagement for individuals are not always a result of their specific job; individuals who have the same job can have different levels of engagement (Rothmann & Welsh, 2013). Executing engagement strategies on a daily basis is of great importance to managers in order to achieve a successful workforce (Wang, 2014).

Background of the Problem

Engaging employees is critical to an organization's success (Rasheed, Khan, & Ramzan, 2013). The success they bring an organization is due to engaged employees understanding the business; wanting to do the right things for their company; willing to attack challenges; and they are prepared to be leaders of change (Gupta & Sharma, 2016).

In addition, engaged employees enhance performance, innovate, and embrace change (Kataria, Rastogi, & Garg, 2013). Along with the positive attributes engaged employees bring to the organization, engaged employees become committed to their organization, which leads to higher job performance, positive behaviors, and lower turnover (Albdour & Altarawneh, 2014). Investing in engaging employees is investing in developing individuals who will hold the knowledge, skills, and relationships needed to create a successful organization (Sawa & Swift, 2013). If this investment into engaging employees does not occur and employees become disengaged, those disengaged employees start to have a negative effect on otherwise engaged individuals by being a burden and not doing their share of the work (Smitha, 2013). Engaging employees is an investment into a successful future of an organization (Rasheed, Khan, & Ramzan, 2013).

Problem Statement

Talented employees leave an organization when their desired career path and the company's provided path do not align (V, 2013). When an organization loses an employee, the costs associated with recruiting, selecting, and training a replacement can exceed 100% of that position's annual salary (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Because of the substantial cost of replacing employees, having the ability to execute employee engagement strategies in order for employees to develop themselves and continue their career within the company is critical to the survival of businesses (Massey & Campbell, 2013). The general business problem is that losing talent can be detrimental to an

organization. The specific business problem is that some business leaders lack engagement strategies necessary to retain talent.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent. The specific population consisted of four managers from an insurance organization located in the MidWest. One on one interviews with the individuals, observations of day-to-day interactions, and company documents were the source of data for the study. Interviewing, observing, and reviewing company documents provided insight into the individuals' knowledge and experience with a given phenomenon such as execution of employee engagement strategies (Yin, 2014). I obtained documents that gave insight into the strategies used by the organization to engage employees (Yin, 2014). The study findings may contribute to social change and affect business practices by increasing the understanding of the importance of employee engagement strategies in a work setting. Through understanding these strategies, leaders may be able to help provide greater job satisfaction to employees, which could translate into improved professional and personal lives.

Nature of the Study

The qualitative methodology is the research method I used for this study. A qualitative method was appropriate for this study because qualitative researchers intend to understand and clarify the human experience through the eyes of the humans who experienced it (Yin, 2014). A quantitative approach was not appropriate for this study

because quantitative research approaches a phenomenon from an outsider's point of view instead of those directly affected by the phenomenon (Marais, 2012). Quantitative studies are appropriate when the research problem is more objective than subjective (Trusty, 2011). The purpose of the current research was to understand the strategies used by business leaders to engage employees. Neither a quantitative method nor a mixed method approach would produce the desired objective results of understanding the strategies necessary to engage employees.

The design of this study was a single case study in order to explore the employee engagement strategies used by leaders within a specific organization to retain talent. Qualitative researchers use case studies to focus on a particular case while maintaining a real-world perspective (Yin, 2014). I focused on the experience of engaging employees from multiple participants' experiences. Qualitative researchers use other approaches besides case study including grounded theory, phenomenology, and ethnography. The grounded theory approach allows researchers to conceptualize what is happening with a phenomenon and then work backward to build hypothesis and theories to fit the collected data (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). A grounded theory approach would not work for this study because I wanted to explore different strategies individuals use to engage employees instead of trying to conceptualize a theory on the topic. Unlike other researchers, phenomenological researchers use different individual's point of views on a single phenomenon to interpret a lived experience (Rocha Pereira, 2012). A researcher using ethnography seeks to explore how lived experiences and understandings affect a

cultural framework (Ronald, 2011). I did not research the culture of the participants, therefore, the ethnography method was inappropriate. The case study approach was the appropriate choice for this study in order to get a real world perspective and clarify the strategies used by some leaders to enhance employee engagement (Yin, 2014).

Research Question

RQ: What strategies do business leaders use to engage employees in order to retain talent?

Interview Questions

In an attempt to answer the research question, participants answered 10 open-ended questions presented in a face-to-face semistructured interview.

1. What do you believe causes employees to become disengaged in their job?
2. How does employee engagement affect employee retention?
3. Describe some interactions you have had with disengaged employees and what you did to try to get those employees engaged.
4. In your current role and past roles, what strategies have managers used to engage employees?
5. What strategies do you use to engage your employees? How are those strategies working?
6. What type of evidence do you look for to know if you are successfully engaging employees?
7. What type of training have you received on engaging employees?

8. Describe the emphasis your superiors or the company overall puts on employee engagement?
9. How does the emphasis on employee engagement of your superior and the company overall affect retention in your organization?
10. What additional information, if any, do you feel is pertinent to this study that may not have been addressed in the interview questions?

Conceptual Framework

The purpose for this study was to explore the employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent. The conceptual framework for this study was the self-determination theory (SDT) which Deci (1971) first introduced. According to the SDT, the drivers of internal motivation for employees are the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). While searching for satisfaction to the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, employees will move towards the positive behaviors of being proactive, learning, and becoming part of a team (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013). These behaviors do not always come from expectations of an external reward but rather an intrinsic motivation to fulfill the three needs (Deci, 1971). If business leaders focus on helping employees satisfy these psychological needs rather than focusing on offering external rewards, strategies to motivate employees may be more effective (Deci, 1971). Relying on external rewards for motivation can risk the employee solely focusing on achieving the reward rather than exceeding expectations with their work or potentially leading to other negative factors by

putting a value on their efforts that does not match their own valuation thereby lessening their intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971). An SDT perspective on the issue of engaging employees with the intent of retaining talent will potentially give business leaders an increased sense of how to address employees and their needs effectively.

Operational Definitions

Employee Engagement. Employee engagement is a term used to express the amount of energy and ownership an employee puts into their job physically, cognitively, and emotionally (Kahn, 1990).

Employee Retention. Employee retention is a way to understand an organization's ability to retain its employees (Rekha & Reddy, 2014).

Leadership. Leadership is having influence over other individuals and being motivated to achieve a certain goal (Burns, 1978).

Organizational Commitment. Organizational commitment is an attitude demonstrated by employees who believe in their organization's goals and values, who work hard to see their organization prosper and who have a strong desire to remain a part of their organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979).

Self-Determination Theory. The self-determination theory is a description of how searching for satisfaction to the needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness, employees will move towards the positive behaviors of being proactive, learning, and becoming part of a team (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions are ideas accepted without verification or further examination (Jansson, 2013). For this research, I assumed all participants were available for interviews, their feedback was unbiased, and their responses were clear and understandable. One requirement for participating in this study was to have a positive reputation towards engaging employees. I used the opinions of my personal contacts to identify participants who met this requirement and verified it through interview questions. I assumed the two references accurately portrayed the participant's positive reputation. I assumed that participants of the study gave an honest response to all interview questions and had confidence that I will keep their responses confidential. I assumed that strategies to engage managerial staff are different from strategies for nonmanagerial staff. The final assumption was that all participants were willing to respond to questions pertaining to employee engagement strategies.

Limitations

Limitations are unintended restrictions that bound the interpretation of the results of a study (Brutus, Aquinis, & Wassmer, 2013). One key limitation of this study was that I currently work in the insurance industry for an insurance carrier that may compete with the participants' employers. In order to mitigate bias, I refrained from all insurance related questions and focused only on leadership strategies. In addition, I followed

research protocol closely and did not inject my own bias into the interviews or observations.

Delimitations

Delimitations are intended restrictions used in a study (Yin, 2014). The intent of this study was to research strategies used to engage employees. The study participant pool excluded upper management and those with managerial reports in order to keep the focus of the study narrow. I minimized the participant pool to four in order to minimize time and maximize the evaluation of their responses. The geographical location of the population was limited to the Midwest region of the United States. The final delimitation was that I selected the participants through purposive sampling.

Significance of the Study

The subject of this study was employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent. It is important for leaders in any industry to realize that their development and support of their employees affect the overall degree of engagement of their employees (Marescaux, Winne, & Sels, 2013). Compared to disengaged employees, engaged employees are less likely to want to leave their organizations (Akanno, Majidadi, & Radda, 2015). Due to the role employee engagement plays in productivity and turnover intent, leaders may be able to use this study to look at execution methods of other leaders in their similar situation and see the importance of executing employee engagement strategies (Kahn, 1990). If leaders can use this study to engage their

employees, the implications for social change could be longer and more fulfilling careers for individuals.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The purpose for this qualitative study was to explore the strategies used by business leaders to engage employees in an attempt to retain talent. In this section, I explored the literature for the importance of employee engagement, ways to engage employees, and the results that occur when employee engagement occurs. The specific areas of focus included employee engagement, costs of employee turnover, employee development, leadership styles, communication, and organizational commitment. The literature review includes journal articles, published dissertations, and early works on theories that will apply to the topic. The organization of the literature review is by topic. A total of 132 articles and books account for the content of the literature review, 94% of the resources cited in the literature review are peer-reviewed and published within five years of my expected completion date. The entire study contains references to 174 articles and books including 148 peer-reviewed articles published within five years of expected completion of the study.

I used the literature to develop an understanding of employee engagement and the effects it can have on employee turnover. In addition, I used the literature to explore antecedents of employee engagement, communication, and different styles of leadership. The intent for this study was to explore the employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent.

I used the SDT as the framework for this study. Deci (1971) used the SDT to explain what creates motivated individuals. According to the SDT, the drivers of internal motivation for employees are the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). By using the literature and interviews to explore how the strategies used by business leaders to engage employees compares to the SDT, this study may help good leaders become better leaders and create work environments where employees can challenge themselves to meet their own personal goals.

The Impact of Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is a term used to express the amount of energy and ownership an employee puts into their job physically, cognitively, and emotionally (Kahn, 1990). Additionally, engaged employees are those that are committed to the company's success, their own success and are unlikely to leave (Cardus, 2013). Conversely, disengaged employees are those that consider their selves first and the organization second, they lose the connection to their employer, fail to express their selves through their work, and focus solely on the requirements of getting their responsibilities completed (Kahn, 1990). Engaging employees is important to organizations because engagement levels affect innovation, productivity, and the overall energy of the company and this effect can be positive or negative depending on the level of engagement (Jauhari, Sehgal, & Sehgal, 2013).

Classifications of employees within an organization include three groups depending on their level of engagement:

- Engaged Employees – Engaged employees are those employees that know the organization's goals and want to use their talents and strengths to meet and exceed those goals every day (Smitha, 2013)
- Not Engaged Employees – Not engaged employees focus on tasks rather than goals. They prefer to complete a given task and continue to the next task while not performing beyond thoroughly explained expectations (Smitha, 2013).
- Disengaged Employees – Disengaged employees are not happy at their job and promote their unhappiness to their coworkers. They undermine otherwise engaged employees and exude potentially harmful negativity throughout the organization (Smitha, 2013).

Antecedents to employee engagement include meaningfulness (employees understand why they are doing their job), safety (they are comfortable with the social aspects of their job including processes and organizational norms), and availability (they are capable of performing their job) (Kahn, 1990). Some other antecedents of employee engagement include competent managers, clear and concise goals, objective means of measuring progress, providing employees with the needed resources, and autonomy (Cardus, 2013). Organizational justice, organizational support, and supervisor support are also antecedents of increased employee engagement (Rasheed, Khan, & Ramzan, 2013).

One way to encourage engagement and give employees an opportunity to be engaged in different functions of their jobs is by giving employees specific job tasks that utilize a variety of skills, have significance to the organization, and offer autonomy (Rothmann & Welsh, 2013). Considering job fit in the hiring process will increase the chances of employees being engaged and committed to the organization (Mete, Sökmen & Biyik, 2016), and a well-designed development process is one characteristic that will keep employees engaged (Vnouckova, 2016). When leaders engage employees, those employees have improved decision making abilities and have a higher level of performance (Thompson & Webber, 2016).

Levels of engagement affect employees at a personal level by how the organization addresses each individual's psychological needs since employees in the same position within the organization can have different engagement levels (Rothmann & Welsh, 2013). Employees want to be engaged in their organizations and development is one way to get employees engaged (Cardus, 2013). Other ways to encourage engagement include managing employees' stress levels, promoting personal well-being, and facilitating self-management (Bhuvanaiah & Raya, 2014). To be engaged, employees need to have opportunities to give feedback to their superiors, feel informed on what is going on with the organization, and know their manager is committed to the organization (Akanno, Majidadi, & Radda, 2015). Rewards or payments are popular attempts at enhancing motivation, however; they could reduce the intrinsic motivation of people

rather than increase it by bringing focus to the short-term goal of the reward rather than the long-term goal of personal growth (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004).

Engaging employees is important to organizations because disengaged employees can create an atmosphere in the workplace that will be detrimental to the future success of the organization by affecting recruitment and retention of employees (Smitha, 2013). Engagement levels are critical to recruiting and retaining employees (Tillot, Walsh, & Moxham, 2013). However, recruitment can undermine otherwise successful engagement strategies if how individuals will fit with the organization's culture is not considered when hiring (Ünal & Turgut, 2015). An employee whose values and goals align with the organization are less likely to leave the organization voluntarily and have a greater commitment to the organization (Memon, Salleh, Baharom, & Harun, 2014).

Internal communications including management communicating with employees and employees communicating with management may have an influence on the degree of engagement of an employee (Karanges, Beatson, Johnston, & Lings, 2014). Leaders who manage employees as individuals and direct efforts towards development and empowerment make significantly more progress towards motivating employees than those relying on external rewards (Marescaux, Winne, & Sels, 2013). Empowering employees is a leader transferring some authority and responsibilities to the employees (Ghosh, 2013). Allowing employees to be involved and participate in their career and development creates a workforce prone to participation and collaboration (Sarti, 2014). In addition, a supervisor who employees can model their selves after encourages

engagement through their actions without having to give commands (Mohammed, Fernando, & Caputi, 2013). Organizations do not achieve an engaged workforce with a simple procedure put into place, it involves addressing all the previously mentioned antecedents of employee engagement in addition to others such as a positive work environment, inclusive leadership style, inclusive coworker relationships, fair compensation, fair organizational policies, and personal well-being (Anitha, 2014).

Employee Empowerment

Empowering employees is the act of leaders giving lower level employees the freedom to make decisions and have responsibility for their jobs (Ghosh, 2013). Leaders who empower their employees allow their employees to solve their own issues by using their creativity, intelligence, initiative and allow the employees to connect to the organization's goals (Pande & Dhar, 2014). However, not all employees want empowerment because along with having the authority and responsibility to make decisions comes a level of accountability that some employees do not want (Nadim & Amir, 2015). Giving an employee control over their work prior to them desiring the extra responsibility and prior to them becoming self-determined may increase stress to uncomfortable levels (Parker, Jimmieson & Amiot, 2016). In order to garner an empowered workforce, along with providing training and granting authority, leaders need to encourage employees to empower their selves by believing in their own skills and abilities (Linjuan & Stacks, 2013).

Leaders can use behaviors to empower employees such as communicating the organization's future goals and expectations, being a role model for how to collaborate and work in a team, demonstrating creative thinking, and supporting their employees' thoughts and opinions (Linjuan & Stacks, 2013). Managers directly affect their employees' levels of empowerment with every conversation and interaction and the results affect job satisfaction and customer service (Namasivayam & Guchait, 2014). Managers can empower employees through granting responsibility, giving access to resources to increase skills and knowledge and fulfilling the employees' psychological needs to enhance self-determination (Verhulst & Boks, 2014).

In addition to job satisfaction and improved performance, employee empowerment is an antecedent to self-determination for employees since empowered employees have access to knowledge that will help them improve their skills and abilities, obtain levels of autonomy, and feel connected to the goals of their team and organization (Deci, 1971). Self-determined employees are important to the organization because they find new ways of doing things and help organizations grow and transition to new stages as economic climates and marketplaces change (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013). Once an employee is empowered, their creativity and job satisfaction increases which in turn increases the quality of service (Min, Ugaddan & Park, 2016; Ukil, 2016). Overall, empowerment is another way to get employees involved in the organization and employee involvement increases organizational commitment, employee engagement, creativity and job satisfaction (Ritter, Venkatraman & Schlauch, 2014).

Employee Turnover

Losing talent can cause long-term negative effects on organizations and affect the organization's performance and capabilities (Cho, Rutherford, Friend, Hamwi & Park, 2017). Talent may leave an organization based on their personal values not fitting with the company's values, which indicates a lack of fit between the person and the organization (Memon, Salleh, Baharom, & Harun, 2014). Many other factors influence employee turnover such as compensation, benefits, attendance, and job performance (Pawar & Chakravarthy, 2014). Along with the voluntary turnover of employees, there is also involuntary turnover such as layoffs and firings due to poor performance (Hongvichit, 2015).

Despite the reason for turnover, when an organization loses an employee, the costs associated with recruiting, selecting, and training a replacement can exceed 100% of that position's annual salary (Bryant & Allen, 2013). The quantifiable costs of employee turnover include screening, interviewing, testing, wages, training, orientation, and technology (Inabinett & Ballaro, 2014). The total costs associated with turnover retention can far exceed the quantifiable expenses (Milman & Dickson, 2013). Employee turnover costs also include time, money, and production, along with other direct and indirect costs to the company (Harrison & Gordon, 2014). Potential additional costs include production disruptions, disrupted customer service, loss of knowledge, loss of experience, and loss of the remaining staff's trust (Bryant & Allen, 2013). Additional effects of poor employee turnover include keeping a positive employee culture, employee

morale, and missed opportunities due to the distraction of losing and replacing an employee (Cloutier, Felusiak, Hill, & Pemberton-Jones, 2015).

The retention of talent plays a critical role in the future success and effectiveness of an organization; especially the high potential employees that deliver higher results than their peers (Cho, Rutherford, Friend, Hamwi & Park, 2017). These high potential employees may be the future leaders of the organization. The responsibilities of management to retain talent do not differ whether the business is large or small; small businesses have the same responsibilities of reducing turnover as large businesses but on a smaller scale (Cordeiro, 2013). The loss of a talent may have more short-term effects on small companies because they are less likely than large companies to have a suitable internal replacement or resources to recruit a skilled replacement (Gialuisi & Coetzer, 2013). However, employee retention is not out of the organization's control and companies need to investigate the root cause or causes of their turnover problems before their turnover rates begin affecting the organization (Harrison & Gordon, 2014).

Employee Development

Employee development is an element of talent management. Talent management is the act of an organization to recruit, develop, and retain talent (Johannsdottir, Olafsson, & Davidsdottir, 2014). Employee development is the use of formal and informal learning to assist in the growth of an individual's career (Eisele, Grohnert, Beusaert, & Segers, 2013). Employee development requires collaboration between employees and their organization to enrich the employee's knowledge, experience, skills, abilities, and

effectiveness (Rahman & Nas, 2013). The investment an organization places on employee development has returns of more productive and effective employees (Rahman & Nas, 2013).

One tool that leaders can provide is a personal development plan (PDP). A PDP is a tool used to document and track an employee's development process. The use of PDPs gives employees the ability to create a plan for their development and reflect on their learning experiences (Eisele, Grohnert, Beausaert, & Segers, 2013). In addition, the employee's supervisor has an opportunity to work with employees to develop PDPs and be a motivating factor in the execution of the plan instead of relying on other informal ways of coaching employees (Eisele, Grohnert, Beausaert, & Segers, 2013).

Beyond the PDP, managers can provide employees with career options and give career-oriented employees goals to meet and encourage them to seek feedback (Ok & Vandenberghe, 2016). A manager's coaching can influence employee satisfaction, career commitment, job performance, and organizational commitment (Kim, Egan, Kim, & Kim, 2013). The coaching approach also encourages innovation through the manager encouraging employees to think through problems differently thus enhancing their skills to solve problems (Rousseau, Aubé, & Tremblay, 2013). In addition, an organization that provides a supportive atmosphere and values employees' efforts will maximize the results of a manager's efforts towards coaching (Kuo, Chang & Chang, 2014). However, coaching does not necessarily need to come from the manager position, having experienced staff coach/mentor others provides a supportive atmosphere for the employee

being coached and provides a way for the mentor to satisfy their needs of relatedness, autonomy, and competency based on the SDT (Kennett & Lomas, 2015).

Development needs differ for each individual, the needs can include specialized training, social competence, and self-competence but the focus of development is creating a long-term career plan (Ewerlin, 2013). Developing employees through internal channels has numerous effects including increasing the quality of the workforce and growing organizational commitment by showing the workforce that there is an opportunity to grow their careers within the organization (Jehanzeb, Rasheed, & Rasheed, 2014). Leaders making the resources available to employees for education and self-development empowers the employees and gives them ownership of the results (Ok & Vandenberghe, 2016). In addition, employees who have the autonomy to control their development are satisfying the psychological need of autonomy, which encourages intrinsic motivation (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004).

Leadership Styles

Leadership is a function of management that represents the style in which leaders influence their employees to reach goals (Udovicic, Pozega, & Crnkovic, 2014). A manager's leadership style has a significant impact on the work-life of their subordinates as well as an employee's organizational commitment (Almutairi, 2016; Moon, 2017). Leaders affect the attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors of employees with the style they use to motivate and influence their employees (Lopez & Ensari, 2014). The relationship between leaders and subordinates, the psychological empowerment employees receive

from leaders, and the engagement levels of leaders all affect an employee's perspective of the organization (Landis, Vick, & Nova, 2015). Successful leaders continually utilize good leadership skills (Oke, 2013). Leaders create an environment that influences employees' attitudes, motivation and behaviors (Men, 2014). Leaders react to problems, distribute rewards and punishments, and provide encouragement and support to employees (Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014). In addition, effective leadership styles improve organization productivity (Mozammel & Haan, 2016).

Six types of leadership styles include autocratic, laissez-faire, transformational, servant leadership, participative, and transactional. However, leaders do not have to apply a single leadership style at all times; there are situations when utilizing a method from a different leadership style is preferred (You-De, You-Yu, Kuan-Yang, & Hui-Chun, 2013). The skill of creating a vision and inspiring other to strive to perform better is great for goal setting while the focus on development and honesty make the servant leadership style ideal for performance appraisals (Duff, 2013). Successful leaders have knowledge of a variety of leadership styles and are able to evaluate the proper style to use in a given situation (Linksi, 2014).

Transformation leaders can publicly offer contingent rewards at times to share the accomplishments of an employee (You-De, You-Yu, Kuan-Yang, & Hui-Chun, 2013). Conversely, transactional leaders can reprimand an employee in private to prevent embarrassment or undue stress on the employee (You-De, You-Yu, Kuan-Yang, & Hui-

Chun, 2013). Autocratic leaders rely on rewards and punishments to get their employees to achieve their objectives (Udovicic, Pozega, & Crnkovic, 2014).

Leaders at all levels should practice aspects of employee empowerment in their day-to-day interactions to increase levels of job satisfaction and the independent of employees in having control over their job (Verhulst & Boks, 2014). A leader that can use the proper method at the right time to motivate employees will get the most out of their employees and build organizational commitment at the same time (Akanno, Majidadi, & Radda, 2015). However, an insufficient leader can create a bad working environment, unclear objectives, poor organization of resources, and other situations that harm the employees and the organization (Militaru & Zanfir, 2014).

Autocratic Leadership. Autocratic leadership is representative of a team set up with a centralized power authority that gives commands and motivates employees with rewards and punishments (Udovicic, Pozega, & Crnkovic, 2014). An autocratic leader is the center of everything that happens and does not delegate responsibility or oversight of work while also not considering the psychological welfare of their employees (Akor, 2014). Autocratic leaders have success in task-oriented positions such as construction operations or low-level positions where expectations of employees are low, but the success may only be short term due to the toll it takes on the employees (Oke, 2013).

Leaders tend to use an autocratic leadership style in situations when the leader has little control their selves over how a task is completed or high control where the responsibility of achieving the objective is solely on them (Oke, 2013). Autocratic leaders

operate with complete control over how their employees perform their duties and what duties they perform (Ghosh, 2013). Followers are unlikely to have a positive perception of an autocratic leader and place the blame for failures on their leader since they do not get to share the praises for successes (Lopez & Ensari, 2014). The autocratic leadership style is associated with managers whom give no social support to employees and only focus on the execution of tasks and obtaining goals (Tromp & Blomme, 2014).

Laissez-faire Leadership. The laissez-faire leadership style resembles a lack of leadership because laissez-faire leaders avoid making decisions, lack influence over their employees, and are often absent when needed (Zwingman, Wegge, Wolf, Rudolf, Schmidt, & Richter, 2014). Laissez-faire leaders do not take responsibilities for their decisions, hesitate in taking action when required, and do not attempt to motivate or support their employees (Romanowska, Larsson, & Theorell, 2013). Employees under a laissez-faire leader are on their own to execute their objectives with little to no support from their leader (Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014).

The laissez-faire leadership style of nonleadership differs from other leadership styles such as transformational that provide employees with autonomy since along with allowing employees a sense a freedom, laissez-faire leaders do not provide support to their employees like transformational leaders (Sahin, Çubuk, & Uslu, 2014; Zwingman, Wegge, Wolf, Rudolf, Schmidt, & Richter, 2014). Leaders with laissez-faire characteristics do not even go as far as to offer external rewards for meeting expectations as in transactional leadership; they are simply nonparticipants (Linjuan & Stacks, 2013).

Leaders who do not get involved with fostering of creativity, innovation, or empowering their followers are not involving their selves or their employees in achieving organizational goals (Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014). Laissez-faire leaders are not effective at leading their employees to success (Sudha, Shahnawaz & Farhat, 2016).

Transformational Leadership. Transformational leadership occurs when leaders and followers interact in ways that enhance all parties' levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1978). Characteristics of transformational leaders include (a) idealized influence, (b) individual consideration, (c) inspirational motivation, and (d) intellectual stimulation (Bass & Avolio, 1996). Transformational leaders empower followers to find new ways to solve problems, promote personal development, empower employees not to fear failure, and transform followers into new leaders (Bass & Avolio, 1996; Burns, 1978).

Transformational leaders focus on the future needs of employees as well as their current needs (Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014). Transformational leaders inspire followers by voicing a positive outlook of the future and leading by example (Schuh, Zhang, & Tian, 2013). Transformational leaders help employees transcend their own self-interests by making them aware of the goals of the entire organization and getting them involved with those goals (Mittal, 2015). They take a real interest in their employees and their well-being and foster a valuable level of trust (Linjuan & Stacks, 2013). Another important aspect of transformational leadership is that it is positively related to

employees being creative and having self-efficacy (Feng, Huang & Zhang, 2016; Hassan, Bashir, Abrar, Baig, Sajjad, & Zubair, 2015).

A basic function of a transformational leader is to create a vision of the future for employees to work towards and provides them the support and resources to achieve that vision rather than giving commands (Zwingman, Wegge, Wolf, Rudolf, Schmidt, & Richter, 2014). Transformational leaders increase engagement levels in employees by communicating clear goals, roles, and caring for employees' needs (Gözükara, I., & Simsek, Ö. F., 2016). During times of change, transformational leaders get their followers to identify with an overall vision of the future and motivate them to work together to obtain the organization's goals and forgo their own self-interests (McKnight, 2013). Lastly, the inspiring and empowerment characteristics of transformational leaders positively relate to the followers' well-being and motivational level (Mozammel & Haan, 2016; Moon, 2017).

The effects transformational leaders have on their employees include employees being more energetic, dedicated, and absorbed in their work (Mohammed, Fernando, & Caputi, 2013). The effects of transformational leaders go beyond job satisfaction, transformational leaders have a positive effect on the levels of engagement their employees demonstrate, organizational commitment, and the effort employees put into their jobs (Almutairi, 2016; Mozammel & Haan, 2016). Transformational leaders find ways to challenge and support their employees by giving autonomy while also suggesting creative solutions without giving commands (Sahin, Çubuk, & Uslu, 2014).

Transformational leaders lead by example and demonstrate high standards of moral and ethical conduct (Joo & Nimon, 2014). During turbulent times, transformational leaders are effective because they seek out new ways of doing things and seek opportunities despite the risk of failure (Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014). Transformational leaders lead the people rather than the results by motivating them with autonomy, education, and being part of a team (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). Most importantly, transformational leaders educate employees on the importance of achieving their objectives and the importance of improving themselves along the way (Burns, 1985).

Servant Leadership. Servant leadership occurs when a leader's primary intention is to service the employees' needs over their own and to enrich others' lives (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leaders promote an ethical and engaging environment for employees, customers, unit leaders, and followers to reach organizational goals without authoritative power (Baghurst & Carter, 2014). Servant leaders and transformational leaders have many similarities such as they influence, empower, and encourage employees while also focusing on communicating and listening to employees (Choudhary & Akhtar, 2013). It is common for servant leaders to be perceived as transformational, but the reverse is not as common (Washington, Sutton, & Sauser, 2014). Servant and transformational leaders both emphasize valuing, mentoring, and empowering followers (Burns, 1978; Greenleaf, 1970). However, they differ in the area of focus with the primary focus of servant leaders being the employee needs while the transformational leader's primary focus being to motivate employees to transcend their own self-interests for the betterment of the

organization (Mittal, 2015; Ramli & Desa, 2014). Servant leaders place the highest prioritization on their employees' best interests and service the employees' individual growth and development above their own interests (Jaramillo, Bande, & Varela, 2014).

Successful servant leaders forgo their own personal egos and concentrate on altruistic actions and development of others (Zhijun, Jing, & Mingjian, 2015). Servant leaders are driven to serve their followers, unlike traditional leaders who are driven to lead (Greenleaf, 1970). Servant leaders possess conceptual skills, integrity, and care for others which are characteristics that followers will look to emulate (Liao, Liden, Meuser, & Wayne, 2014). Effective servant leaders create meaningful relationships with employees and a sense of community within teams which helps create an environment in which the employee feels like the organization cares and they will grow a sense of commitment to the organization. (Yingying & Qing, 2014). As a result, employees with strong organizational commitments strive to provide meaningful contributions to the company (Tan, 2016).

One effect of servant leadership is an increased sense of organizational justice, meaning employees feel they are treated equally by the organization (Zehir, Akyuz, Eren, & Turhan, 2013). Other effects of servant leadership include greater trust in the leadership of the organization, a sense of enhanced leader effectiveness, and increased levels of collaboration amongst member of the organization (Parris & Peachey, 2013). The actions of leaders are mimicked by their subordinates and when the leader shows compassion and care for the employees, employees will show the same level of care and

compassion to the customer (Koyun, Burke, Astakhova, Eren, & Cetin, 2014). Servant leaders are valuable resources during change processes since they show compassion and allow employees to take ownership in not only their job but the change process (Sousa, Dierendonck, 2014). Overall, a servant leader looks to serve the employees and the community without concern of their own short term profits which promotes an engaging environment for employees to succeed (Cater & Beal, 2015).

Transactional Leadership. Transactional leadership consists of rewarding followers once a job is completed effectively, waiting for things to go wrong before taking action, constant monitoring and transactional leaders motivate followers by giving them rewards that meet their personal desires (Linjuan & Stacks, 2013). By making promises and fulfilling those promises, transactional leaders are able to get objectives met with promises of salary raises and promotions while inspiring a reasonable degree of loyalty and commitment of their employees (Burns, 1978). Transactional leaders rely on contractual obligations and reward employees when employees meet these obligations and relate to followers with exchanges of work for valued things (Bass & Avolio, 1996; Burns, 1978). However, transactional leaders do not allow employees to interact with the decision-making process as much as transformational leaders and the transactional leaders rely more on rewards and compensation as motivational factors over inspiration and intellectual stimulation (You-De, You-Yu, Kuan-Yang, & Hui-Chun, 2013). Transactional leaders' main goal is to identify and clarify objectives for their employees

and communicate what the reward will be for successfully achieving the goal (Saeed, 2014).

Leaders with a transactional leadership style succeed when they clearly detail the expectations of the followers and the rewards they will receive upon effective completion of their responsibilities (Dartey-Baah & Ampofo, 2015). Transactional leaders focus on current tasks and having them performed and executed correctly (Saeed, Almas, Anis-ul-Haq, & Niazi, 2014). Once the external rewards stop or are lessened, the motivation achieved of the employees with the transactional leadership style is likely to stop or be reduced (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004).

Participative Leadership. Participative leaders seek to get their employees connected with their organizations by involving them in goal-setting, problem solving, and decision-making (Militaru & Zanfir, 2014). Getting employees involved in their career leads to having engaged employees (Sarti, 2014). Participative leaders focus on coaching, supporting their employees, delegation, and empowerment (Parumasur & Govender, 2013).

The self-determination theory (SDT) provides support to participative leadership. According to the SDT, rather than external rewards being an intrinsic motivator, it is the search to satisfy the psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness that enhances intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971). People's desire to be proactive, to learn, and to become part of a team is what motivates them to perform without external rewards (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013). Business leaders who recognize the importance of

satisfying their employees' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness can be more successful in motivating their employees than those leaders who rely on extrinsic rewards (Graves & Luciano, 2013).

Participative leaders get their employees engaged through participation (Militaru & Zafir, 2014). Leaders who get their employees engaged in the everyday thought processes and decision making are preparing their employees to be engaged in other aspects of work such as change (S & Pakkeerappa, 2014). In addition, the participation of employees in goal setting, problem solving, and decision-making frees up management resources to focus their time and energy on issues that deal with larger issues that cannot be delegated (Linski, 2014). By delegating tasks and responsibilities, participative leaders are providing develop opportunities by allowing their employees to execute strategies outside of their normal roles, ownership of their work, and creating an engaging work environment (Parumasur & Govender, 2013).

Execution Strategy

Organizational leaders create strategies to communicate a high-level plan the organization will use to reach a goal and an execution strategy is the process used by the people in the organization to produce the desired results (Kumar Srivastava & Sushil, 2014). A failure to execute strategies is the root cause of many organizational failures (Choi Sang, Lim Zhi & Tan Wee, 2016). The proper execution strategy is almost as important as choosing the correct strategy to execute since failure to properly execute the correct strategy will still result in failure (Mostafa, Mohsen, & Mojtaba, 2014). Effective

execution strategies begin with clearly defining who owns decision making authority and ensuring a concise flow of information to where it is needed (Nagayoshi, 2015; Thanyawatpornkul, Siengthai & Johri, 2016). Managers use performance management systems to assess, monitor, control, and revise the execution process (Kumar, Srivastava, & Sushil, 2014).

Mid-level managers are employees that have a great impact on the execution of strategies since they are the leaders closest to the ultimate customer and directly over the employees that will execute the strategy (Salih & Doll, 2013). Organizations that support the mid-level managers and their employees by allowing flexibility in decision making are ones that have the best results when it comes to strategy execution since unpredictable situations are bound to arise (Choi Sang, Lim Zhi & Tan Wee, 2016). The leaders who demonstrate a leadership style such as participative and transformational are better adept to successful execution since they empower their employees and get them involved with the decision making so that they can take ownership in the execution of strategies (Bass & Avolio, 1996; Burns, 1978; Militaru & Zanfir, 2014).

Employees want to be involved and engaged (Cardus, 2013). Organizations and leaders who show trust in their employee's decision making do more than simply increasing the chances of a strategy being successfully implemented, they get them engaged and experience all the benefits of having an engaged workforce (Choi Sang, Lim Zhi & Tan Wee, 2016). Leaders who demonstrate the autocratic or transactional leadership styles remove the individual employees from the execution strategies by not

involving them in the decision making process (Udovicic, Pozega, & Crnkovic, 2014; You-De, You-Yu, Kuan-Yang, & Hui-Chun, 2013). Organizational leaders who put as much time and energy in the execution strategies and getting employees involved as they do in setting the strategy have a less likelihood of their strategies failing as those that do not put emphasis on the execution (Mostafa, Mohsen, & Mojtaba, 2014).

Autonomy

The need for autonomy is one of the three psychological needs that drive internal motivation as stated by the SDT (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). Autonomy at work refers to the amount of personal discretion an employee has on the procedures and methods they use to do their job (Madanagopal & Thenmozhi, 2015). People's psychological need for autonomy comes from their desire to have choices and feel empowered (Deci, 1971). Autonomy does not simply equate to independence, employees can have the freedom to make their own choices while relying on others for resources and support (Lynch, 2013). The amount of autonomy an employee has over how they perform their job is a factor that influences employee turnover (Pawar & Chakravarthy, 2014). An individual that has autonomy in their decision-making has a greater sense of ownership in that decision than a person who is coerced (Ryan & Deci, 2000). A lack of autonomy can increase stress and any addition of stress to a person can increase turnover intentions (Rainayee, 2013). In addition, a lack of autonomy can represent a lack of trust an organization has in its employees leading to a breakdown in organizational commitment of employees (Mishra, Mishra, & Grubb, 2015).

A leader who allows their employees to have autonomy in their work is different from a leader who sacrifices oversight or control (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Participative leaders get their employees involved in decision making and delegate responsibilities in a way that empowers their employee by giving them autonomy (Parumasur & Govender, 2013). Transformational leaders support their employees while challenging them and providing suggestions for alternative ways of doing things (Sahin, Çubuk, & Uslu, 2014). Successful transactional leaders are clear on their expectations and the tasks assigned yet they are still able to grant their employees autonomy in how to meet those expectations and tasks completed (Dartey-Baah & Ampofo, 2015). Successful leaders give their employees access to the resources necessary for them to increase the competence levels and succeed without constant oversight (Radel, Pelletier, & Sarrazin, 2013). Leaders who give their employees autonomy and feedback are showing those employees they have trust in their decision making and that level of trust will affect job performance and job satisfaction (Dhurup, 2015; Gonzalez-Mule, Courtright, DeGeest, Seong & Hong, 2016).

Communication

Communication an important tool of leaders to generate results from followers (Voica & Vasile, 2013). For communication to be effective, a leader must convey a clear message that is understood by their followers which is difficult without the proper executable techniques that go beyond just knowing the proper rules of communication (Turaga, 2016). Interpersonal (one-to-one), mass (to a large but limited group of people), and organizational (to the entire organization) are all types of communications that

organizations and leaders use to express a message (Yenen, Öztürk, & Kaya, 2014). Clear, honest, and consistent communication from leaders to employees encourages employee engagement by keeping employees focused, energized, and productive (Swarnalatha & Prasanna, 2013).

Organizational performance improves when communication channels are clear and employees are empowered to communicate the professional and personal needs (Bell & Roebuck, 2015). Employees respect their leaders and the organization when there exists transparent communication (Men, 2014). A leader cannot expect to have a strong relationship with all employees, but a leader can increase the quality of communication with employees whom they have a low level relationship with by communicating expectations and roles while providing support to the employee (Matta, Scott, Koopman, & Conlon, 2015). Effective communication between followers and leaders can create strong emotional bonds with the organization and employees prefer to work where leaders communicate effectively and treat them with respect (Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2013). A leader's message must be clear and consistent, but the method of communication is a factor that will determine whether the follower truly internalizes what the leader wants (Tanner & Otto, 2016). Leaders cannot overestimate the quality of their communications and actively participate in garnering feedback about the message they are delivering and the delivery methods they are using (Katsuhiko, 2017).

The way a leader speaks and influences their followers explains the difference between a follower showing their true potential and forgoing self-interest as in a

transformational leader and a leader relying on rewards and punishments similar to a transactional leader (Tanner & Otto, 2016). A leader who communicates well is one who engages employees in conversations, gives and receives feedback, welcomes collaborative decision-making, listens, is approachable, and respectful (Johansson, Miller, & Hamrin, 2014). Leaders can build relationships amongst employees or harm them, but when a manager communicates in a manner that empowers employees, bonds them, and cherishes their knowledge, the manager builds a staff of self-determined individuals (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004). Despite the method being interpersonal, mass, or organizational, all messages must relay an honest message to the listeners in order to build a trusting workforce (Yenen, Öztürk, & Kaya, 2014).

Communication is important in many aspects of leadership. Transformational and participative leaders use communication to define goals and expectations and to empower employees by sympathizing and getting the employees involved in the organization (Bass and Avolio, 1996; Sarti, 2014). Transactional leaders have a need to explain the expectations and the rewards for meeting those expectations to followers to motivate their employees and prevent misunderstandings (Burns, 1978). Leaders communicate their appreciation for employees and use their words to bond with employees to enhance organizational commitment (Rothmann & Welsh, 2013). Leaders communicate some things by not speaking to employees as in the example of when a manager does not follow up on a given task due to the trust a manager has in their employees and the need to allow them a level of autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, communication is not

isolated to what the leader says, but it is how the leader listens to their followers and provides support to their employees by actively listening (Tanner & Otto, 2016). Every aspect of a leader's communication or lack of communication has an effect on individuals, especially when leaders use their communication skills to inspire and portray a positive outlook to their followers (Argenti, 2017; Schuh, Zhang, & Tian, 2013).

Organizational Commitment

Organizational commitment is an attitude demonstrated by employees who believe in their organization's goals and values, who work hard to see their organization prosper, and who have a strong desire to remain a part of their organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). The long-term success of an organization depends on attracting and retaining committed employees who carry out their specific job responsibilities and participate in innovative activities that go beyond their specific job responsibilities (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). Leadership is an important aspect that affects organizational commitment of employees (Almutairi, 2016; Choi Sang, Lim Zhi & Tan Wee, 2016). A supportive organization that contributes to an employee's feelings of approval, esteem, and affiliation increases organization commitment (Rothmann & Welsh, 2013). An employee's commitment increases when the organization invests in the employee's future by offering career development opportunities and ways for self-improvement (Jehanzeb, Rasheed, & Rasheed, 2014). In contrast, employees' commitment levels decrease during a merger or acquisition when the future and the company's commitment is in question (Hung & Wu, 2016).

When an employee has a strong commitment to the organization, they begin to identify with the goals and values of the company and can work through tough times when their personal satisfaction is wavering (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). An employee who views their work as meaningful and that they have influence over their work will tend to have an increased feeling of organizational commitment of those who view their jobs as meaningless (Tan, 2016). An employee's commitment to an organization grows stronger when they feel like they can trust the organization, feel safe, and empowered (Sahin, Çubuk, & Uslu, 2014). The amount of autonomy given to employees is an indicator of the level of trust and organization has for its employees (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Affording employees a certain amount of freedom of choice is a way to indicate trust in the employee's decisions (Mishra, Mishra, & Grubb, 2015). Empowering employees with a sense of ownership and connectedness to the organization's goals increases commitment (Nadim & Amir, 2015).

Job satisfaction, management style, trust, values, culture, diversity, and leadership are all amongst dimensions that are desirable to employees and influence organizational commitment (Shahid & Azhar, 2013). The promotions, rewards, and the amount of investment the organization puts into its employees' development are all means of communicating what the organization values and drives commitment (Ortega-Parra & Miguel Ángel Sastre-Castillo, 2013). Organizations that value autonomy, creativity, flexibility, and being supportive of employees are executing a message that encourages commitment (Sahin, Çubuk, & Uslu, 2014). Support by not only the organization but also

their coworkers has a positive impact on an employee's engagement levels and in addition, a positive influence on their organizational commitment due to being in a bonding relationship with coworkers (Rothmann & Welsh, 2013). To a further extent, in addition to autonomy, organizations valuing knowledge and relationships encourage commitment from self-determined talent (Deci & Vansteenkiste, 2004; Sahin, Çubuk, & Uslu, 2014).

Mid-level managers play a crucial role in how employees perceive their organization and their individual roles (Salih & Doll, 2013). The manager is likely to be viewed as a representative of the organization and the relationship an employee has with their manager is a representation of the relationship that employee has with the organization (Wang, 2014). The manager's everyday interactions are opportunities to influence the perceptions employees have of the organization's attitude towards them (Choi Sang, Lim Zhi & Tan Wee, 2016). Any leadership behaviors that build trust, inspire creativity, inspire individuals to achieve their goals and empower employees are behaviors that support organizational commitment (Garg & Ramjee, 2013).

Transition

In Section 1, I detailed the research problem of this doctoral study. I used the foundation and background to present the concerns of an organization that lacks the ability to execute strategies intended to engage employees. The problem statement contains the general and specific business problem and the purpose statement includes an explanation of the research method, design, and participant selection process. I presented

justification for the research problem in the literature review using data collected about employee engagement, leadership styles, and organizational commitment. Section 2 of this study is an outline of the research I performed and details areas of the research I summarized in the first section. I formally present the collected data and application of the findings in Section 3.

Section 2: The Project

The focus for this qualitative case study was to explore the employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent. I collected data from four managers in underwriting, marketing and specialty departments of large commercial insurance companies. Understanding the employee engagement strategies of leaders may assist in furthering the ability to retain employees and create satisfying careers for individuals. This section covers (a) the restatement of the purpose, (b) the role of the researcher, (c) research participants, (d) research method and design, (e) population and sampling, (f) ethical research, (g) data collection instruments, (h) data collection techniques, (i) data organization techniques, and (j) reliability and validity of the study. Section 3 presents the findings of the study and their application.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent. The specific population consisted of four managers from an insurance organization located in the Midwest United States. One on one interviews with the individuals, observations of the workplace, and company documents were the sources of data for the study. Interviewing, observing, and reviewing company documents provided insight into the individuals' knowledge and experience with a given phenomenon such as execution of employee engagement strategies (Yin, 2014). Participants remained confidential throughout the study. I obtained documents that gave insight into the strategies used by the organization to engage employees. The study

findings may contribute to social change and affect business practices by increasing the understanding of the importance of employee engagement strategies in a work setting. Through understanding these strategies, leaders may be able to help provide greater job satisfaction to employees, which could translate into improved professional and personal lives.

Role of the Researcher

I constructed the design and data collection process for the study to mediate any personal bias and ethical considerations. In an attempt to alleviate bias, the researcher should be open to evidence that contradicts their initial beliefs (Yin, 2014). I performed the interviews with an open mind and was open to all potential outcomes. Semistructured interviews are a trustworthy data collection technique that allows a researcher to understand the studied topic (Bernard, 2013). The participants were from an insurance company in the Midwest region of the United States that did not include my own place of employment. In order to gain access to the participants, I used personal and professional contacts as resources for introduction and as resources to validate the participants' reputation in engaging employees. I avoided discussing my own career and experiences with the participants prior to any interview in order to minimize my impact on the findings.

I used a purposeful sampling process to select participants using my personal and professional contacts to find participants that meet the requirements for this study. Using purposeful sampling allowed me to choose participants who are relevant to the study and

who would provide plenty of data (Yin, 2011). Prior to conducting the study, I received approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to ensure I am in compliance with the ethical standards required by Walden University and any United States federal regulations that apply. In addition, I adhered to all ethical standards set forth in the Belmont Report (Bird, 2010).

The Belmont Report contains principles that protect the well-being of a study's participants (Bromley, Mikesell, Jones, & Khodyakov, 2015). I used the guidance of the Belmont Report to treat all participants as independent agents and avoid any harm related to the research process by ensuring that all participation was voluntary while maximizing benefits and reducing any potential risks. In conjunction with my own efforts, the IRB approval validated my efforts.

Participants

I purposefully sought managers who had three or more years of management experience to participate in this study. In addition, the participants must have had a positive reputation in engaging employees. I used these requirements to focus the study on employee engagement strategies used by managers towards employees and used participants that had enough time in their role to gain significant experience in doing so. I verified the participant's positive reputation in engaging employees from the opinions of my contacts and the Human Resources department of the organization. This requirement ensured the participants provided insight into successful engagement strategies. The reason for these requirements was to narrow the pool to those participants able to provide

data that is directly relevant to the study, this step is a critical part of qualitative studies (Yin, 2011).

I used personal and professional contacts to find participants that met the requirements for this study. I explained the study to my contacts and asked them to recommend or introduce me to individuals that met the requirements. To avoid ethical conflicts, I received informed consent from each participant and their organization prior to proceeding with interviews (Sobottka, 2016). I selected participants from the insurance industry to minimize uncontrollable variables such as variances in physical activity and physical location attributes. To enhance trust and openness, I fully explained the intentions for the study and potential benefits. I discussed with each participant their freedom to quit the study at any time and about the confidentiality of their participation.

Upon identifying potential participants, I contacted them via email. In these contacts, I provided participants with an overview of the study, information on the informed consent forms, and the value of their participation. In addition, I notified them of the confidentiality of the participation and the procedures I went through to protect their identity. After the interviews, I asked for a recommendation of others in their position that may fit the requirements for participation and may have been able to participate in the case of needed further saturation. I also asked the Human Resource department if they could give me any training documents or other similar documents that would give insight into their approach to employee engagement.

Research Method and Design

Researchers use the qualitative research method to study people's lives in real-world situations, represent views and perspectives of participants, contribute insight into current or emerging concepts, and use multiple sources for evidence (Yin, 2011). The goal for quantitative researchers includes trying to measure results in numbers and find new information and is useful when the research problem is more objective than subjective (Trusty, 2011). The mixed method is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

Research Method

In qualitative research, a researcher intends to understand and clarify the human experience through the eyes of the humans who experienced it (Yin, 2014). The reasons for using a qualitative method include (a) studying people in real world situations and representing the views and perspectives of those people; (b) exploring the contextual conditions within which people live; (c) gaining insight into human behavior; and (d) using multiple resources to gather a full perspective on a lived phenomenon (Yin, 2011). A quantitative researcher studies a phenomenon from an outsider's perspective instead of trying to understand it from an insider's point of view as someone who experienced the phenomenon (Marais, 2012). Quantitative studies are appropriate when the research problem is more objective than subjective (Trusty, 2011), which this study is not. In a quantitative study, the researcher attempts to quantify the findings and not fully tell the story behind the findings (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). The purpose for my current

research was to understand the strategies used by business leaders to engage and retain employees. I wanted to gain an understanding of the strategies by using a qualitative study; a quantitative study gives an explanation rather than an understanding (Stake, 1995). Subsequently, I used a qualitative method for this study.

Data saturation occurs when the data collection process ceases to find new data (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). In qualitative research, there is not a definitive method to ensure saturation, but the researcher should have an understanding of the importance of data saturation (Walker, 2012). It is difficult to predict the number of participants needed to reach data saturation prior to performing a qualitative study (Kerr, Nixon, & Wild, 2010). I began the study by using four managers as participants. I was prepared to add participants if saturation had not been met after interviewing the originally selected participants.

Research Design

A researcher uses the case study design to contribute to the knowledge of an individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena (Yin, 2014). When performing a case study, the researcher is able to get close to the participants and their day-to-day interactions (Poulis, Poulis & Plakoyiannaki, 2013). The other qualitative designs are grounded theory, phenomenology, and ethnography. A researcher using grounded theory conceptualizes what is happening with a phenomenon and then works backwards to build a hypothesis and theories to fit the collected data (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). Phenomenological researchers use outsiders' point of views on a single

phenomenon to interpret a lived experience (Rocha Pereira, 2012). An ethnographer seeks to explore how lived experiences and understandings effect a cultural framework (Ronald, 2011). Neither grounded theory, phenomenology, nor ethnography allows a researcher to explore an insider's perspective on a phenomenon like a case study. The intent for this study was to explore the front-line managers' lived experiences of executing employee engagement strategies. I chose to use a case study for the research.

Population and Sampling

The population of this study was four managers with only nonmanagerial reports within an insurance organization who had a positive reputation of engaging employees and a minimum of three years of management experience. An adequate sample size is one that is sufficient to answer the research question and the quality of the participants is more important than the quantity (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). In addition, purposeful sampling limits the population pool by limiting the field to those who are relevant to the study and who will provide plenty of data (Yin, 2011). Purposeful sampling gives the researcher an opportunity to recruit participants based on their knowledge and experience of a specific phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). I chose managers with nonmanagerial reports to focus the study on engagement strategies used on a specific group of individuals, front-line employees. Using my personal contacts in the insurance industry, I purposefully chose managers with the necessary positive reputation in engaging employees. Interviewing and observing four managers provided insight into successful

engagement strategies from the manager's perspective and was adequate to answer the research question of this study.

Ethical Research

In order to protect the research participants ethically, I received permission from the Walden University IRB, approval number 09-16-16-0432147, before continuing the research. I obtained permission to use the study sites and the company that was involved in the study prior to proceeding. I presented an informed consent form to the participants personally, assured them of confidentiality, and detailed the intentions of the study and the consent form. I delivered the forms electronically. The participants agreed to participate by indicating "I consent" on the return electronic communication. I had the participants sign the consent form in person when we met for the interview. I notified the participants of their right to withdrawal from the study at any point from the study verbally or in writing without penalty. All participants had an opportunity to ask questions via phone or email about their participation in this study. There were not any incentives offered for participation to avoid coercion and I received the signed consent forms prior to scheduling interviews. All participants had an opportunity to review their responses and modify them for clarity. During this study, I put ethical standards and confidentiality at the forefront in order to protect the participants as recommended by Fein and Kulik (2011). I did not use names of participants or their organizations in the study to maintain confidentiality. To assure confidentiality throughout the study, generic labels of Participant 1 and Participant 2 were used to indicate each participant. I will keep

the signed informed consent forms and interview recordings in a locked storage cabinet and a password protected flash drive for five years. After that time, I will destroy the forms, interview recordings, and all other data.

Data Collection Instruments

Qualitative research is useful when trying to answer why and how questions, unlike quantitative research (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). In addition to myself being the primary data collection instrument, I used interviews and observations as data collection instruments to allow the participants to express their behavior, relationships, and feelings within the phenomenon without being concerned with simplifying it to answers to questions on a questionnaire (Yin, 2011). I used member checking to increase the validity and credibility of a study by allowing the participants to review the representation of their responses for accuracy (Andrasik, et al., 2014; Yin, 2011). Observations consisted of general notes that I took about the general mood and atmosphere of the workplace I experienced during my time with the company performing interviews. I did not allow my personal bias to affect my observations by describing things as I see them without performing my own personal interpretations. I used open-ended interview questions observations to collect data for this study (see Appendix A). Each interview consisted of 10 open-ended questions. Through these interviews, participants were able to express their views and all answers were interpreted fairly (Yin, 2014). Prior to data collection, I obtained IRB approval and informed consent from each participant and participating company to collect the data. I expected the managers to

answer the interview questions using their personal experiences with engaging employees. I did not offer incentives for participation.

The goal for using interviews as the main collection instrument was to explore the strategies used by business leaders in the insurance industry to implement successful employee engagement in the workplace to retain talent. I chose the interview questions in an attempt to answer the research question of this study which is what strategies do business leaders use to implement successful employee engagement in the workplace to retain talent. To ensure the reliability of the interview questions, I sought feedback from experts in case study research. In addition, to increase the reliability of the results, during interviews I took detailed notes of the responses and nonverbal communications, obtained accurate transcripts by allowing participants to review my analysis of their responses for clarification, and accurately coded all interviews (Yu, Jannasch-Pennell, & DiGangi, 2011).

Data Collection Technique

The researcher's purpose for interviews during a qualitative case study is not to gather yes or no answers but rather to gain knowledge of the participants' lived experiences (Stake, 1995). I used open-ended questions during the interviews to allow participants to use their own words in expressing their experiences, which gives a deeper insight than using closed-ended questions (Yin, 2014). Using open-ended questions during qualitative interviews requires the researcher to be engaged in the interviewee's responses and spend energy on understanding the responses given (Yin, 2011).

Interviewing participants provide insight into the individuals' knowledge and experience with execution of employee engagement strategies (Yin, 2014). The problem associated with interviews is that they are intimate interactions that require trust and some interviewees may be reluctant to be open and honest with the interviewer (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). I gained trust with participants by openly explaining the goals for the research and the process that was taken to ensure the protection of their identity. I audio recorded the interviews and had the interviews transcribed by Rev.com. I performed member checking which gave participants an opportunity to review the analysis of their responses for accuracy.

The interviews took place at a location chosen by the participants. Both the participant and I agreed upon the time, date, and location for the interviews. Each interview lasted between 15 and 25 minutes. After the interviews, I observed the participants in their workplace to experience their interactions with their employees first hand. I took detailed notes on these experiences. All participants had the opportunity to review their responses and modify them for clarity. The interviews gave me knowledge of the employee engagement strategies that quantitative research would not access (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013).

Data Organization Technique

In qualitative research, confidentiality is essential (Gibson, Benson, & Brand, 2013). I gained informed consent to audio record interviews and after receiving their signed forms, I maintained confidentiality by using alphanumeric codes to identify

participants and their employers. During recorded interviews, I only used alphanumeric codes and first names to refer to participants and I used Rev to transcribe the recordings. I will keep the consent forms, notes, interview recordings, and transcriptions in a locked cabinet and password-protected flash drive for five years then I will destroy all documents (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). Maintaining confidentiality of the participants is critical to ethical research (Fein & Kulik, 2011).

Data Analysis

During the interviews, in order to allow participants the freedom to express their own views in their own words, I asked open-ended questions and all interviews were transcribed by Rev.com. I asked each participant the interview questions listed in Appendix A.

In addition to the interviews, I observed the atmosphere of the workplace and I performed a literature review. I used methodological triangulation method to confirm the data and I ensured it was complete by checking it against multiple sources (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). The methodological triangulation method uses interviews, observations, and literature reviews to validate the data (Walshe, 2011).

I will use Rev, software designed to record and transcribe qualitative data, to organize the unstructured data of interview transcripts and field notes. Utilizing Rev, researchers can record and transcribe the recorded interviews. Using the full transcripts of each participant's interview, I utilized the modified van Kaam method for analysis of the data. The modified van Kaam method is a method to determine universal themes and

shared meanings (Moustakas, 1994). The van Kaam method has seven steps for thematic analysis: (a) grouping of significant data from the participants, (b) reducing and eliminating irrelevant data, (c) clustering of related ideas used to identify central themes, (d) identifying common themes between interviews, (e) developing textual descriptions for each participant, (f) developing structural descriptions for each participant, and (g) create a textural-structural description of the meanings of each participant's experience (Moustakas, 1994). I used data coding to identify common terms, ideas, and phrases in the interviews and presented them during the final section of the study.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability of case study research refers to the ability to repeat the data collection procedures and get the similar results (Yin, 2014). The confirmability of a study indicates the ability for others to confirm the findings of the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). A valid study accurately reflects and represents the world being studied (Yin, 2010). In the next two subsections, I described the methods I used to make this study reliable and valid

Reliability

To achieve reliability with the study, I purposely chose the participants to assure they have experienced the phenomenon of engaging employees (Bernard, 2013). The use of one set of questions for all participants will add to the ability to replicate the research and confirm the results (Yin, 2011). In addition to using a single set of open-ended questions, I supported all inferences with valid information that is clear to all to make it easy for everyone to understand how I created the inferences and confirm the findings.

After a participant's interview is transcribed, I member checked by having participants review my analysis of their responses. Member checking gives participants an opportunity to review the researcher's representation of their responses for accuracy, which increases the validity and credibility of a study (Andrasik, et al., 2014; Yin, 2011). The transferability of a study indicates the ability to transfer the ideas of a study to additional groups in other settings and is an indication of the reliability of a study (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). I used concepts detailed in the theoretical framework to guide the analysis of the collected data to maximize transferability of the study and increase the reliability of the study.

Validity

I used methodological triangulation to ensure the credibility, confirmability, transferability, and overall validity of the findings. Using methodological triangulation improves the validity of a case study by utilizing multiple methods of data collection and analysis to validate the findings (Shokri-Ghasabeh, & Chileshe, 2014; Yin, 2013). In addition, triangulation confirms the data and ensures that the data is complete (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). Literature review, interviews, and observations are three data collection methods I used to validate the data.

Credibility refers to the level of trust a person can place in the researcher's results and is proven by the researcher spending sufficient time on the topic (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). I used multiple resources such as observations, interviews, and review of documents to achieve credibility in my study (Stake, 1995). An expert panel of

researchers not participating in the research assessed this study. The approval of an expert panel review will give additional credibility to the data collection techniques and results (Di Fabio, 2016).

Confirmability is the accuracy and lack of bias of a study (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). I achieved confirmability by analyzing literature written by researchers and linking their research to my findings (Di Fabio, 2016). In effort to increase confirmability, I supported my findings with evidence from my interviews, observations, and document reviews (Stake, 1995).

Transferability is the capability for other researchers to transfer findings from one study to other situations without losing the integrity of the original findings (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013). I described the context of this study in order to allow other researchers to judge the applicability of my results to the specific cases and I detailed the steps I took in data collection to ensure they can be duplicated (Di Fabio, 2016).

A method to reach dependability in a study is data saturation, but there is not a definitive method to ensure data saturation (Walker, 2012). Knowing when a study reaches the saturation point prior to performing a qualitative study is almost impossible (Kerr, Nixon, & Wild, 2010). One indication that saturation has been reached is to notice patterns repeating in the data collected and a sense that no further data will add to the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). I used four participants and reached data saturation.

Transition and Summary

The focus for this qualitative single case study was to understand the employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain employees. In this section, I covered (a) the restatement of the purpose, (b) the role of the researcher, (c) research participants, (d) research method and design, (e) population and sampling, (f) ethical research, (g) data collection instruments, (h) data collection techniques, (i) data organization techniques, and (j) reliability and validity of the study. Section 3 contains a summary of the data, analysis of the data, and the findings from the data. In addition, I explained how the findings of this study will potentially influence business and society. The section concludes with recommendations for future research.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Overview of Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore employee engagement strategies used by business leaders to retain talent. I conducted four semistructured interviews with four managers in the insurance industry who had three or more years of management experience and a positive reputation for engaging employees. I gathered data from the participants through face-to-face semistructured interviews, observations of day-to-day interactions and review of a company survey.

The interviews took place in a private meeting room at the company's facility. The interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and then coded. I used Microsoft Excel to organize the data and to identify the major themes from the interviews. I was able to triangulate the data within Microsoft Excel by comparing the data, themes, documents, and codes.

The study findings may contribute to social change and affect business practices by increasing the understanding of the importance of employee engagement strategies in a work setting. Through understanding these strategies, leaders may be able to help provide greater job satisfaction to employees, which could translate into improved professional and personal lives by providing a greater sense of fulfillment and confidence in their careers.

Presentation of the Findings

The overarching question for this study was: What strategies do business leaders use to engage employees to retain talent? I categorized themes from my findings and identified strategies used by leaders to engage employees to retain talent. I interviewed four managers with semistructured interviews consisting of nine questions. The average interview lasted 15 minutes. I reached data saturation during the fourth interview. After the fourth interview, no new information emerged and no further interviews were needed. Once I completed the interviews, I used Rev software to transcribe the recordings. I emailed the transcripts to the participants and gave each participant a week to amend or correct the transcriptions. After I had reviewed the approved transcripts, I sent each participant my interpretations of the data to ensure I understood what they were attempting to convey in their interviews.

The study findings may be of interest to the leaders of other organizations who are interested in building and retaining an engaged workforce. In this section, I described the purpose of each question and detailed the responses received from each participant. Then, I provided a description of the emerging themes and described how the themes related to the conceptual framework and literature. The primary research question addressed in this study was: What strategies do business leaders use to engage employees to retain talent? I developed the interview questions to gain an understanding of employee engagement strategies used to retain talent.

Interview Questions

I designed the interview questions to give the participants the opportunity to express their perspectives on employee engagement strategies used to retain talent. I purposely chose each question to get a response on the different aspects of engaging employees from each participant. Semistructured interviews are a trustworthy data collection technique that allows a researcher to understand the studied topic (Bernard, 2013). I detail the participants' responses to each question in the following subsections.

Interview Question 1

The first question I asked the participants was, "What do you believe causes employees to become disengaged in their job?" The purpose of Question 1 was to understand the participant's knowledge of employee engagement and their experience with identifying disengaged employees. Disengaged employees do not put the company's interest over their own, they are not committed to their employer, they lose interest in their job, and they do not put additional effort into their jobs except to complete what they need to complete to satisfy their job descriptions (Smitha, 2013). Disengaged employees have a negative impact on other employees and can cause otherwise engaged employees to become disengaged due to those employees having to do more to make up for the lost efforts of the disengaged (Moreland, 2013).

Participant 1 places a lack of respect from the employee as an antecedent of disengagement. Lack of respect for the company, the leaders of the company or their

direct managers. Participant 1 believes the level of respect for the company and the leaders of the company is the cause of disengagement.

Participant 2 placed the manager as the source of disengagement for employees. According to Participant 2, managers who do not focus on employees over the bottom line and do not care about their employees as people cause disengagement. Participant 2 also mentioned that managers who look at their employees as workers and not as a team will have a team of disengaged employees.

Participant 3 linked the lack of recognition to disengagement. Participant 3 noted that in addition to recognition, the lack of appreciation from the managers and company and lack of enjoyment in the job are antecedents to employee disengagement. Participant 3 believes all of these aspects can be described as job fulfillment.

Participant 4 described the manager and employee not being a fit for one another as a potential cause for disengagement. The manager and the employee may each be doing things right but the management strategy used may just not be a good fit for the employee. According to Participant 4, disengagement could be caused by the company culture not being a good fit for the employee. Another factor mentioned by Participant 4 that could cause disengagement is the employee not enjoying the routine of their job, which will ultimately cause the employee not to be satisfied with their job.

All 4 participants mentioned the manager as a cause for disengagement. A manager's lack of respect for employees, discouragement, and a lack of appreciation were all mentioned as antecedents of disengagement caused by managers. All participants

included that managers only caring about the bottom line rather than employees was an antecedent of disengagement.

Interview Question 2

The second question I asked the participants was “How does employee engagement affect employee retention?” The purpose of Question 2 was to give the participants an opportunity to express their opinions on the impact of employee engagement on retaining talent. Leaders need to find the causes of employee retention problems before their turnover rates begin affecting the organization (Harrison & Gordon, 2014). All participants agreed that engagement greatly affects employee retention. All participants linked employee engagement with job fulfillment. Also, they all noted that once an employee becomes fulfilled at their job, they are less likely to leave than those who are unfulfilled.

Participant 1 believes all employees want their basic needs fulfilled. Participant 1 included compensation, benefits, and location as basic needs but stated that once a leader can meet those needs, engaging employees will increase the likelihood talent being retained. Participant 2 exemplified their belief in engaging employees by noting the tenured staff she has in place. Participant 2 mentioned that numerous employees have 15 or more years and they believe this is contributable to both hers and the company’s focus on engaging employees.

Participant 3 made the following comment to highlight the connection between engagement and retention, “I think if employees are disengaged they are going to look for

another job. If they're engaged they're going to look for future opportunities, figure out ways that they can become more involved and help the company grow.” Participant 4 mentioned that engaged employees are not typically the ones looking for different jobs. For example, Participant 4 described the entrepreneurial style of leadership style within the company. Participant 4 detailed that several employees are the only people within the company that do a certain operation and therefore, they run that area as their own business.

Interview Question 3

The third request I had for the participants was, “Describe some interactions you have had with disengaged employees and what you did to try to get those employees engaged”. The purpose of Question 3 was to allow the participants to describe their personal experiences with engaging employees. Antecedents of employee engagement include competent managers, clear and concise goals, objective means of measuring progress, providing employees with the needed resources, and autonomy (Cardus, 2013).

Participant 1 described definitive goals as a means to encourage employee engagement. Participant 1 explained that when there are definitive goals employees work together to find new ways to meet those goals. Participant 1 added that showing employees their progress towards reaching their goals allows employees to monitor their work and see what effects their results. Participant 1 experienced an employee who was engaged while being monitored but was disengaged when he was not monitored. One method Participant 1 used to engage this employee was to add measurements and detail

very specific goals, clarifying the goals motivated the employee to be productive while no one was watching because they had targets they were trying to meet.

Participant 2 does not currently have disengaged employees on their team, but previously, did have one disengaged employee. Participant 2 explained that the employee had a different type of background from their current job, and they were not familiar with a job without clear black and white concepts. Participant 2 recognized that the employee was not enjoying their job and not understanding the concepts. Instead of reprimanding the employee for not meeting the expectations, Participant 2 was honest with the employee and let them know that this job may not be a good fit for them. Participant 2 was able to help the employee find a new position outside of the company and, to this day, that employee is still there. This scenario Participant 2 detailed showed how job fit is a factor in employee engagement levels.

Participant 3 stressed the importance and difficulty of identifying disengaged employees. Participant 3 noted that identifying disengaged employees can be difficult because there may be outside factors, such as something going at home, or numerous other factors outside of work that causes short term disengagement. Participant 3 uses open communication in identifying the root causes of disengagement. According to Participant 3, managers within the participating company will try to talk to the employee about their day to day operations, what they like doing, what they would want to do in a perfect world, and try to gain insight into whether something can be done to engage the employee and try to find ways to make that happen. Participant 3 explained that

understanding the concerns of the employees and the cause will allow leaders to find out if the employee is simply not a good fit for the role for the company or if there is something else fostering the disengagement.

Participant 4 asks many questions to identify disengaged employees and get to the root causes of their disengagement. Participant 4 continued by saying that once a leader identifies a disengaged employee, the leaders in the participating organization will establish options for the employee to get them reengaged. If none of the options work, then planting ideas that the employee may want to look into finding another position that will work out better for them is the next move. Participant 4 described one move the leaders of the company currently make that may lead to an engaged staff is that they make sure the employee is a good fit for the job and the company before hiring. Participant 4 said that they spend a lot of time talking with the employee to make sure everyone will be happy.

Participants 2, 3, and 4 all mentioned job fit as a driver of engagement and was the main cause for their interactions with disengaged employees. Participant 3 and 4 described the importance of open communication with employees to gain knowledge of the root causes of disengagement and described that finding the root causes of disengagement is important because the cause may not be in the workplace but rather something happening in their personal lives.

Interview Question 4

The fourth question I asked the participants was, “In your current role and past roles, what strategies have managers used to engage employees?” The purpose of Question 4 was to allow the participants to describe employee engagement strategies they have seen used by other managers. Employee engagement is important to leaders within organizations because engagement levels affect innovation, productivity, and the overall energy of the company and this effect can be positive or negative depending on the level of engagement (Jauhari, Sehgal, & Sehgal, 2013).

Participant 1 mentioned that they have never had a manager who focused on employee engagement. However, Participant 1 did describe how fellow managers within their prior employer worked together to create engagement strategies for their employees, and it was successful. Participant 1 described the engagement strategies as utilizing definitive goals and open communication to reengage employees.

Participant 2 was engaged by their mentor when they first started in the profession. Participant 2 detailed that each day their mentor would go around and spend time with every employee no matter how busy he was. Participant 2 also noted that their mentor got to know everyone personally, and this method had a huge impact on how they manage currently. Participant 2 mentioned that at their current company, the leader does the same thing but they did have an experience with a manager who did not get to know the employees and it was a very disconnected team. Participant 2 took that as an example of how not to lead.

Participant 3 noted that they have seen past managers discuss employees' goals and where they want to go with their career. Participant 3 noted that these discussions included what the employee liked in their job and a combination of short and long-term goals of the employee. Participant 3 also mentioned that conversations were directed towards the personal life of the employee and included finding out what is going on that could affect their job. Participant 3 described managers as wanting to find out what they could do to make the employee's work-life balance better. Participant 3 has seen this show of caring for the employee has gone a long way in developing loyalty.

Participant 4 breached this question during Question 3 by discussing how the company currently puts a heavy focus on reviewing employees before hiring and listening to employees on what they can do better towards engagement. Participant 4 mentioned focusing on an employee's fit for the job and that it is the biggest strategy they have seen that impacts engagement.

Participants 2, 3, and 4 all mentioned communication being the tool commonly used by their current and past managers to encourage engagement. They also mentioned that managers have communicated goals, along with how their employees' jobs affect the company's goals. They stated that managers who provide resources to the employees to do their job successfully have made positive impacts on their engagement levels.

Interview Question 5

The fifth question I asked the participants was, "What strategies do you use to engage your employees and how are those strategies working?" The purpose of Question 5 was

to provide an opportunity for the participants to share the strategies they use to engage employees. All participants explained ways they and the company treat their employees rather than specific actions they took with their employees.

Participant 1 finds open communication and regular one-on-ones with employees to be very effective. Participant 1 mentioned that knowing what your employees are doing and what motivates them goes a long way towards building trust and having them feel good about work. Participant 1 also noted that the communication aspect is in addition to the multiple means of measuring results and progress discussed during Question 1.

Participant 2 believes strongly in putting the employees first, and by doing that, they will put customers first. Participant 2 mentioned that putting employees first means to make it a primary responsibility to make sure employees have the tools and the resources to do their jobs. Participant 2 elaborated by saying that if an employee comes to a manager for assistance, the manager should stop the current task and help, unless engaged in a time-sensitive task. Participant 2 stated that supporting employees through education and making sure they have the technology to perform their job are additionally important. Participant 2 added that the leadership of the participating organization is very supportive of education and providing travel funds to go places to support the employees' growth.

Participant 3 described how it is important to figure out what people want to do and what can be done to help them get where they want to go in their career. Participant 3 explained that being flexible at work and accommodating for an employee's changing

needs is critical to engagement. Participant 3 added that there are times when no matter what a manager does, it appears that the employee has other things going on and they would not be happy no matter what the manager did for them.

Participant 4 spoke about a new employee that recently started with the company. Participant 4 described the employee as engaged and that the company's leadership is trying to give them responsibility. Participant 4 added that the company's leadership is also trying to let the new employee know that she is supported and that she is not alone, which is important, especially for the younger generation who needs assistance from more seasoned employees. Participant 4 mentioned giving employees positive feedback when they do something well and critical feedback if something needs to be corrected is important. All the while, letting them know their feedback is because the company cares about their growth. According to Participant 4, the strategies described have worked well, but regular check-ins are important. Participant 4 explained that check-ins may be monthly at first and may reduce to quarterly as employees get more comfortable in their new situation.

All participants use regular one-on-one meetings and communication in their employee engagement strategies. All participants make sure their employees have the resources necessary to do their job and make sure employees know that management cares about them. Also, all participants focus on their employees and listen to them to discover what motivates each employee. The engagement strategies being used by all

participants are working well. All participants referred to the low turnover within the organization and a happy and engaged staff as examples of their success.

Interview Question 6

The sixth question I asked the participants was, “What type of evidence do you look for to know if you are successfully engaging employees?” The purpose of Question 6 was to identify characteristics the participants look for to identify an engaged employee. All participants varied in their responses, but they were all similar in the fact that it takes close observation to measure engagement levels.

Participant 1 looks for participation from employees to gauge employee engagement levels. Participant 1 noted that leaders see positive progress in the results when employees are engaged. Participant 1 also mentioned that a negative aspect of measurements is that employees gear their efforts towards those measurable objectives and tend to disregard areas of their work that are not measured. Participant 1 described an experience with employees focusing heavily on the measurable objectives. Participant one described that the management team saw the majority of the people were hitting the goals, which was the plan, however, when it came to compensation and rewards, it was difficult to reward everyone at the same time equally due to upper management not being on board for a very successful and engaged department. In Participant 1’s opinion, the reward system became demotivating, and the employees were not supportive of the system.

In Participant 1's past organization, to create measurements, the managers focused on IT methods to automate things such as timing turnover times on quotes and service levels. Participant 1 mentioned that the ability to measure progress allowed management to compare levels of service between employees, and having subjective goals allowed everyone to get engaged. Participant 1 added that the method of creating measurements created a lot of positive activity and was very motivating.

Participant 2 looks for the comfort levels of employees when analyzing employee engagement levels and how employees feel about coming to the manager with questions. Participant 2 mentioned that a manager who is respected by their employees will hear things through others about people's happiness. Participant 2 noted that noticing an employee backstabbing to boost their reputation is a signal of an employee not putting the company first. Participant 2 described that the number one way to identify engaged employees is looking for those that concentrate on the betterment of others, and added that if an employee is unwilling to help others, it is typically a sign of disengagement.

Participant 3 mentioned they look for the behavioral component of employees. Participant 3 elaborated by saying that the behavioral components they look for to indicate engagement include eagerness, interest in new projects, offering to help others, overall happiness, positivity and appearance of enjoying work. Participant 4 identified enthusiasm for the work and body language as indicators of engaged employees. Participant 4 mentioned that they can usually tell when someone is about to quit from the way they look in the hallway. Participant 4 mentioned they have only seen one employee

leave that was a complete surprise. Participant 4 described the employee's behavior that left as someone who would always smile, but that taught the participant not to trust a smile and to always keep an eye out for indicators in employees' body language.

Participants 1, 3, and 4 all focus on the employee's nonverbal cues to measure engagement. Participant 4 has learned you cannot always trust an employee's smile to gauge engagement. Participant 4 looks for body language and enthusiasm. Participant 3 looks for behavioral components in employees such as interest in new projects, how easily they get distracted, and willingness to help others as indicators of engagement. Participant 2 looks for their decision making as a factor of engagement and added that engaged employees make decisions that benefit their selves and the company. Participant 1 looks at results and participation to measure engagement levels.

Interview Question 7

The seventh question I asked the participants was, "What type of training have you received on engaging employees?" The purpose of Question 7 was to explore the training participants have received on engaging employees. Participants 1 and 2 both had some type of training while Participants 3 and 4 have not participated in training regarding employee engagement.

Participant 1 has experienced a series of courses put on by the members of the HR department at their previous organization. Participant 1 described that the courses encompassed reading a book, watching some movies, participating in practice cases and then going out and implementing what they learned on their employees. During the

course, Participant 1 learned that with the fully engaged employees, they were to leave them alone outside of recognizing the positive things they are doing. The instructors of the course also taught participants to identify the engaged but not fully engaged employees who are those who are very productive, very efficient, and good at their job but not passionate about their work. Participant 2 took several Stephen Covey training courses along with multiple other training courses throughout the years. The biggest impact on Participant 2's management style was outside reading of Jesus CEO.

Participants 3 and 4 had not received training on engaging employees. They both mentioned that they learned on the job by watching their superiors. Participant 2 participated in some formal training but learned the most by reading books on leadership.

Interview Question 8

The eighth request I had for the participants was, "Describe the emphasis your superiors or the company overall put on employee engagement". The purpose of Question 8 was to gain insight into the culture of the company towards employee engagement. All four participants said the company places a strong emphasis on engagement and the managers are frequently discussing engagement.

Participant 1 does not see a lot of action from the leaders in their current organization towards engagement. Participant 1 has noticed that there is a lot of talking about engagement from leadership within the organization, but engagement levels are currently high with minimal effort. Participant 1 noted that the company is wanting to do more for engagement, and they are talking about the necessary next steps. In Participant 1's prior

company, leaders put a lot of energy and investment in employee engagement. According to Participant 1, when the efforts started paying off, and employees responded, the company failed to reward these efforts. Participant 1 explained that instead of rewarding the new behaviors, upper management made them the new standard. Participant 1 noted that the new behaviors by the staff dramatically raised the expectations, which caused employees to disengage and created ill will between employees and leadership.

Participant 2 mentioned the fact that the organization was recently named as one of the best companies to work for in their state, and that leadership within the organization supports education, employees enjoying their work and taking vacations. Participant 2 shared that the organization's leaders respect employees' families and the leaders rally around employees when they are in need.

Participant 3's manager talks about engagement regularly. Participant 3 mentioned discussions include employees' happiness and if they feel an employee is long-term or short-term. Participant 3 said the company used an example of the tenured staff as the company's emphasis on engagement.

Participant 4 categorized the organization's leadership emphasis on employee engagement as strong. Participant 4 described that the staff of the organization runs very lean. Therefore, there are not a lot of backups for positions. Participant 4 stated that paying attention to engagement levels is critical because of the large impact of an employee leaving a small company.

All the participants stated the company emphasized engagement. Only Participant 2 could explain how the company shows this emphasis beyond talking about engagement. Participant 2 detailed the company's support for education, support of vacation and respect for the family as means of emphasizing employee engagement.

Interview Question 9

The ninth question I asked the participants was, "How does the emphasis on employee engagement of your superior and the company overall affect retention in your organization?" The purpose of Question 8 was to allow the participants to describe how the company's culture affects retention of talent.

In Participant 1's prior company the emphasis on engagement had helped engagement. Participant 1 described that in the past, upper managers were very disengaged from their employees and employees did not feel upper management cared for employees and they lacked confidence in them. Participant 1 added that people felt the new upper management got there due to seniority and not due to skill or talent. Participant 1 explained the lack of respect for management lead to employees not respecting management and this caused employees to leave the organization. Participant 1 detailed that middle management stepped in and had more control, that is when retention increased as a result of increased stress on engagement.

Participant 2 described that when they first started with the organization, the former president did not place much emphasis on engagement and turnover was extremely high at around 60%. 16 or 17 years ago employees rallied together to express their

unhappiness. Participant 2 detailed that board listened and brought in a new human resources person and brought in new leadership. Participant 2 explained that the fact the individuals on the board listened to the employees is an example of the members of the board's focus on employees. The turnover is now very low because employees do not leave, according to Participant 2.

Participant 3 believes the emphasis the company puts on engagement has had a great impact on retention. Participant 3 mentioned that employees have been with the organization for 25 or more years and it is more of a cultural emphasis on engagement than individual steps to get employees engaged. Participant 3 noted that everyone learns from one another and believes in one another, and with the close nature of the company, identifying disengaged employees is quick.

Participant 4 believes over a long period, disengagement impacts retentions. Employees may experience short term disengagement simply due to outside factors that may be happening with their family or other personal issues. According to Participant 4, people now feel strongly about the current leadership, and if it were not like that, people would leave.

All participants agreed the company's emphasis on engagement has positively affected retention. All participants mentioned that there is a very tenured staff at the company and turnover has decreased dramatically under the new leadership. All the participants gave credit to the company's leaders for listening to the staff about the low

levels of engagement and making changes within the company to turn around the retention.

Interview Question 10

The tenth question I asked the participants was, “What additional information, if any, do you feel is pertinent to this study that may not have been addressed in the interview questions?” The purpose of Question 10 was to give participants an opportunity to share any insight into employee engagement not addressed in the prior questions. Participants 1 and 2 added the importance of communication and focus on employees as being a factor of employee engagement.

Employee Survey

The leadership of the participating organization participates in an annual survey of the employees given by a nationwide publication. The survey is designed to determine how employees feel about working for the company by focusing on eight core areas including Leadership and Planning; Corporate Culture and Communications; Role Satisfaction; Work Environment; Relationship with Supervisor; Training, Development, and Resources; Pay and Benefits; and Overall Engagement. In 2015, the organization received the designation of the 2nd best company to work for in their state

In the Overall Engagement section of the survey, 99% of respondents indicated they Agree Strongly or Agree Somewhat to the statement of “Overall, I am very satisfied with my employer” and 96% of respondents indicated Agree Strongly or Agree Somewhat to the statement “I plan to continue my career with this organization for at least two more

years”. With an average score of 95% of respondents responding positively in the Overall Engagement section, this survey gives a strong indication of the engaging culture of the employees within the organization.

Theme Development

For this study, I used the participants’ responses to form common themes related to the research question. The research question of this study is, what strategies do business leaders use to engage employees to retain talent? The following themes resulted from analyzing the data: (a) Job Fit, (b) Open and honest communication, (c) Going beyond words to recognize disengagement, (d) Lack of formal employee engagement training and (e) Respectful and caring leadership.

Table 1

Themes and Key Words/Phrases from Personal Interviews

Themes	Key Word/Phrases	Participants
Job fit can impact engagement	Employee not a good fit for manager Employee not enjoying the routine of the job Employee not being fulfilled by the job Basic need of employee not being fulfilled	3
Open and honest communication	Ask employees questions Communicate with employees about	4

	<p>their engagement levels</p> <p>Find the root cause of disengagement</p> <p>Give employees options</p> <p>Regular one on one meetings</p>	
Looking beyond words to recognize disengagement	<p>Body language</p> <p>Employee's participation</p> <p>Enthusiasm</p> <p>Decision making</p>	4
Lack of formal employee engagement training	<p>No formal training on employee engagement provided by the leadership of the organization</p>	3
Respectful and caring leadership	<p>Give supportive feedback</p> <p>Monitor employees</p> <p>Acknowledge employees</p> <p>Get to know what motivates employees</p>	4

Connecting the Findings to the Literature

While analyzing the themes, I used the conceptual framework of Deci's (1971) Self-Determination Theory. The SDT is represented in all the themes by all themes being supportive of the need to fulfill the psychological needs of employees. The themes relate to managers helping employees satisfy their psychological needs of autonomy,

competence, and relatedness by addressing job fit, communication, and caring for the employees.

The participants' responses were supported by the literature found on the topic of employee engagement. The authors cited for this study did not detail exact ways to engage employees, similarly to how the participants were unable to state specific strategies they or the company used to engage employees. Kahn (1990), Cardus (2013), Rothman & Welsh (2013), and Mete, Sökmen, and Biyik (2016) all wrote about the antecedents of engagement and not specific execution strategies.

Kahn (1990) wrote about fulfilling employees' needs to create engagement which relates to Participant 1's comments on fulfilling employees' needs. Cardus (2013) stated that engaged employees are unlikely to leave their organization. All participants mentioned that engagement levels of employees impact retention in the company. Rothman & Welsh (2013) wrote about the positive impacts of job tasks utilizing a variety of skills, the employee to feel like their job is significant, and for employees to have a sense of autonomy. All participants discussed the need for employees to feel trusted, respected, and appreciated for the work that they perform. Mete, Sökmen, and Biyik (2016) wrote about the importance of job fit increasing organizational commitment which supports Participant 2, 3 and 4's comments about the impact of the employee being a good fit for the job on engagement levels. Throughout the analysis of the findings, the views of authors of the literature aligned with the participants' responses.

Theme 1: Job fit can impact engagement

Participants 2, 3 and 4 all discussed variations of the importance of the employee being a good fit for the job as an antecedent to employee engagement. Participants 2, 3 and 4 described job fit as meaning that the employee enjoys the daily routine of their job, conforms with the culture of the company, gets along with their manager, be a good fit with the employees of the organization and be fulfilled by their job. Considering job fit in the hiring process will increase the chances of employees being committed to the organization (Mete, Sökmen & Biyik, 2016). Deci (1971) supports the approach of attempting to find employees who will be fulfilled by their job because he mentioned that fulfilled employees become self-determined employees and this approach of fulfilling employees works better to gain results than external rewards.

Participant 4 described how in the organization, the interviews are intense in a positive way to ensure that the employee will be a good fit and that the company takes a lot of time for multiple people to speak with a candidate to make sure the employee is a good fit for the company and the company is a good fit for the employee. Participant 4 explained that ensuring that the leadership of the organization hires the right people that fit the job is a first step in reducing the number of disengaged employees within the workforce. Shahid & Azhar (2013) supports the efforts the organization's leadership put forth in the hiring process by stating that attracting and retaining committed employees who carry out their specific job responsibilities and participate in innovative activities that go beyond their specific job responsibilities creates long term success. According to

Participant 4, a thorough interview process is the organization's leadership's first chance to make sure they hire the right people for the job and the organization.

Participant 2 explained that they had experienced an employee that came to the position with a slightly different background in a position that was more process oriented and had black and white ways of doing things. Participant 2 was able to identify that this individual was not a good fit and was able to help her find a new position where she would be happier. Participant 2 mentioned that in addition to front-line employees being a good fit for the role and organization, managers must conform with the culture within the organization. A manager's leadership style impacts employee's organizational commitment (Almutairi, 2016; Moon, 2017). Participant 2 explained that they experienced a manager who failed to put employees first and did not engage the staff. Participant 2 noted that employees did not want to work with this manager because the manager failed to conform to the company's engaging culture, and the manager did not stay with the organization for long. Participant 2 added that the company replaced the manager with someone who now puts employees first.

Participant 1 stressed the importance of a job fulfilling an employee's basic needs that include compensation, benefits, and location. Participant 1 noted that if these attributes do not fit the employee's needs or wants, the employee will put their interests first and not engage in the organization. According to Participant 1, an unfulfilled employee is unlikely to put extra effort towards the company's success and is unlikely to stay with the company.

Theme 2: Open and honest communication

Clear, honest, and consistent communication encourages employee engagement by keeping employees focused, energized, and productive (Swarnalatha & Prasanna, 2013). All participants discussed communication as a factor of employee engagement. Participant 1 finds it very effective to have extremely open communications and regular one on one meetings with employees to get to know the employees and know what they are doing. Deci (1971) listed relatedness as a psychological need of employees that must be met to create self-determined employees. According to Participant 2, in addition to knowing what your employees are doing at work, communicating with the employees lets a manager find out what motivates their employees, builds trust with them and lets them know that someone cares about them.

Open communication with leaders is supported by Linjuan and Stacks (2013) when they said that transformational leaders take an interest in their employees and their well-being and foster a valuable level of trust. Participant 4 believes being able to communicate with employees makes giving positive and critical feedback easier and provides an avenue to know how the employee is feeling about their job. Participant 4 added that by asking questions and talking with employees, a manager gives an employee the opportunity to express their true concerns and feelings. An employee will have strong emotional bonds as a result of effective communication and employees prefer to work for leaders that show respect and caring for their employees (Dasgupta, Suar, & Singh, 2013). Participant 2 included another benefit of open communication with employees is

that you tap into the rumors that employees are saying to other employees. Participant 2 elaborated by saying that listening to the rumors makes a manager aware of other employees who might be having a problem or issue but do not feel comfortable speaking about to a manager.

Theme 3: Looking beyond words to recognize disengagement

All the participants described that sometimes a manager has to look past words to identify disengagement in employees. Kahn (1990) described disengaged employees as those who consider their selves first and the organization second, they lose the connection to their employer, fail to express their selves through their work, and focus solely on the requirements of getting their responsibilities completed. The attributes Kahn (1990) described would be hard for a manager to recognize by only having brief conversations with an employee. Participant 4 stated that a smile and words could be covering up a bigger problem. According to the participants, recognizing body language tendencies; do they show interest in new projects; do they participate; do they look for opportunities to help others; do they find ways to distract their selves from the work; do they have a positive attitude, are they achieving positive results; and are they doing what is best for the company are all nonverbal indicators of disengagement.

Theme 4: Lack of formal employee engagement training

Neither Participant 3 nor 4 have experienced formal training in employee engagement. Participant 2 took it upon their self to take management courses and to read books related to leadership. Participant 1 had a few formal training courses in their past

organization. According to the participants, the staff within the participating organization are engaged, tenured, and are committed to their organization despite not offering formal training to employees. All participants described getting the best training from watching other managers and how they treated their employees.

Despite the lack of formal training on employee engagement, the participants have shown traits of engaging managers. The traits align with the wide array of literature on the topic of employee engagement. The authors of the literature discussed the attributes of a successful leader. The authors who wrote literature on the topic of transformational leadership mentioned attributes of a successful leader. Burns (1978) speaks of transformational leaders as those who enhance levels of motivation and morality. Bass & Avolio (1996) described the characteristics of transformation leaders as those that include (a) idealized influence, (b) individual consideration, (c) inspirational motivation, and (d) intellectual stimulation. Saeed, et al. (2014) described transformational leaders as leaders who inspire others and lead by example. In addition to overlapping in their descriptions of transformational leaders, the authors also did not outline a means of achieving these attributes. The authors described the attributes that certain individuals had and learned over time with experience.

Theme 5: Respectful and caring leadership

A manager's leadership style has a significant impact on the work-life of their subordinates as well as an employee's organizational commitment (Almutairi, 2016; Moon, 2017). According to Participant 1, in the past, the leadership team within the

participating organization did not respect and care for the employees which lead to retention problems. Participant one explained that members of the board made a change to replace the leadership team with a new president who cared for the employees and ever since retention has not been positive. Top leadership are the members of the organization who make the decision and provide the resources to management. Participant 2 also stated that the leadership cares for the employees by providing managers with the needed resources, trust, and support to attempt to satisfy employees psychological needs, managers have a successful chance to create a self-determined task. According to Participant 2, without the support of top leadership, managers will have a tough time fulfilling the needs of employees. According to Deci (1971), the psychological needs of employees to become self motivated include autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

Participant 1 described a situation in a prior organization that demonstrated the results of a noncaring leadership team. Participant one detailed that the frontline managers had teamed up to develop a clear plan to give employees clear and concise objectives and developed the means to provide accurate measurements. This strategy engaged the staff by letting them know the expectations, however, leadership was not supportive and failed to give the managers the resources to reward those that deserved extra attention and forced the managers to raise the expectations so not everyone could meet them. Participant one stated that the lack of support resulted in disengaging those newly engaged employees and retention issues. The scenario detailed by Participant 1 is

an example of management taking action to satisfying the psychological needs mentioned by Deci (1971) but was halted by the lack of support from top leadership.

Applications to Professional Practice

The study findings may contribute to business practices by increasing the understanding of the importance of employee engagement strategies in a work setting and how engagement levels affect retention. Engaged employees are committed to the company's success, their success and are unlikely to leave an organization (Cardus, 2013). Engaged employees are innovative, productive, and create a positive environment within the organization (Jauhari, Sehgal, & Sehgal, 2013). The themes that came out of the interviews indicated engagement was more than simple strategies.

Theme 1, job fit impacts engagement, indicates that engagement starts at the hiring process with making sure an employee is a good fit for the job and the organization. Theme 2, open and honest communication, is something that happens numerous times every day. Employee engagement strategies are not something that a manager does one time. Theme 3, looking beyond words to recognize disengagement takes constant monitoring of employees to identify signs of disengagement. Theme 4, lack of formal employee engagement training, is an indication that a company does not need to put on expensive formal engagement training to create an engaged workforce. Theme 5, respectful and caring leadership, is an example that it takes genuine caring to embrace all aspects of what it takes to engage employees. Kahn (1990), Rasheed et al. (2013) and, Cardus (2013) included comfort with the aspects of the job, competent

managers, supervisor support and organizational support as antecedents to employee engagement. Rothman & Welsh (2013) described that each employee has different needs, so it is important that managers pay attention to employees as individuals as well as part of the team.

In the participating organization, the leadership team created a culture where the employees matter and their voices are heard which results in high engagement levels. Leaders who manage employees as individuals and put a focus on development and empowerment motivate employees more than those relying on external rewards (Marescaux, Winne, & Sels, 2013). According to Participants 2, 3 and 4, the retention of talent is a result of the leadership's focus on engagement. With the company's past successful results with engaging employees, the participants expressed the company appears to be in a good position to adjust to changing needs. This study may help leaders of organizations look at the way they communicate with employees, could give insight into the techniques used to engage employees, and create a culture to make leaders prepared to conquer new challenges when natural turnover occurs.

Implications for Social Change

The study findings may contribute to social change by providing leaders ideas on how to provide greater job satisfaction to employees, which could translate into improved professional and personal lives. A person's job is a large part of their life, especially those who work eight to ten hours a day or more for five or six days a week. Being unfulfilled or dissatisfied with their job can impact employees' quality of life outside of

work. Increasing engagement levels within companies will increase levels of fulfillment and satisfaction felt by people during the time a person spends at work leading to individuals feeling more confident about their careers and their companies which can carry over into how they feel outside of their careers.

As explained by the participants, prior leaders of the participating organization did not create a culture of engagement, and they experienced high levels of turnover. The participants recalled that the board listened and replaced upper management with a team that would create the culture that engaged employees. According to Participant 1, the change in leadership at the company occurred 16 years ago and in the next couple years the company will have numerous employees retiring with over 15 years of experience in the organization. The change in management and the resulting increase in retention is evidence that a culture that engages employees has a positive effect on the feelings of fulfillment of employees. If more leaders of organizations could embody an engaging culture, fewer people would be unhappy at their job and enjoy their lives more which would positively impact their life away from work.

Recommendations for Action

Top management within organizations and human resource departments may be interested in taking note of the leadership in the participating organization's success in engaging employees and creating a committed workforce. The leadership within the participating organization took steps to put the right people in the right places. Engaging employees is more than independent strategies or training. The culture which supports

and encourages employee engagement starts at the top. Training and a continuous focus on engagement will give the managers the tools necessary to reengage those disengaged employees and ensure that managers will have the tools necessary to engage future employees. Also, formal training and formal tools will provide support to managers when they get into situations that they have not dealt with before and give them the tools to grow and learn while keeping them engaged as well. Engagement starts with conversations at the highest levels of leadership and disseminated across the organization.

The lack of formal training put on by the leadership within the participating organization is an example of how an engaging culture will impact all levels of employees and create an environment of people who will groom others to be engaging. Disengaged leadership that does not embrace employee engagement can negatively impact all of those below them or around them. The individuals I interviewed learned mostly from watching other leaders and either learned what to do or what not to do. Talks about employee engagement should start with the top leaders within an organization. Once the top leaders change the way they talk to their employees, an engaging approach towards employees will be filtered down through the other employees of the organization.

Recommendations for Further Research

Future researchers may desire to go deeper into how to reengage employees that are already disengaged. The leadership within the participating company is an example of leadership that once had an issue with disengaged employees, but they were able to make

large changes to impact engagement levels. Few companies have the capabilities to make such drastic changes such as changing their presidents and CEOs. A deeper insight into smaller ways to change the culture of an organization would benefit leaders and allow for an easier path for leaders to take to impact the employees within their organizations.

The leadership of the participating organization is flexible and mobile due to their size, and top management was able to have a close relationship with front-line managers and employees. This ability to interact closely with front-line managers is not the case of leadership within large organizations. The size of the organization is a limitation of this study.

The results of this study could be disseminated during conventions where leaders of companies come together to discuss various business topics or by articles in business journals. Also, in addition to using means to address current business leaders, having the topic of employee engagement addressed in college courses or during conferences at colleges could help get the message of the importance of employee engagement to future business leaders. Professors could use literature written on the employee engagement to incorporate the topic of employee engagement into business courses.

Reflections

I started the Doctoral Study process with a personal bias from experiencing disengagement in my career and only a few engaging managers. This study gave me insight into a manager's thought process on the subject. I had a preconceived notion that it took a formal strategy and strict action plan to develop and retain an engaged

workforce. In contradiction to my initial thoughts, I discovered through my experiences with the participants that some managers are simply naturally good at engaging employees and each manager has an impact on their employees and potential future leaders of the organization. This study contradicted my initial feelings that engagement in organizations need to go past talks about focusing on engagement and move towards actionable strategies. Upon completing this study, I now believe that communication is a very important part of engagement. Engaging employees takes a constant and consistent mindset aimed at engaging employees. It is not just something you check off a list every day. Every conversation, interaction, or lack thereof with employees affects engagement levels. Employee engagement must be imparted into every conversation starting at the top leadership to become part of the organization's culture.

Conclusion

The focus of this study was to discover the employee engagement strategies used by leaders to retain talent. The literature and personal interviews confirmed that employee engagement does impact retention. Both also confirmed the difficulty of creating actionable executable strategies to engage employees. Engagement is an easy topic to discuss with a large-scale view but when executed, must be analyzed through a small-scale lens. Every individual has needs that need to be met to become engaged. Engagement needs to be part of the culture of the company and embraced by top leadership which impacts the types of communication between stakeholders within the rest of the organization.

References

- Akor, P. U. (2014). Influence of autocratic leadership style on the job performance of academic librarians in Benue State. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 4(7), 148-152. doi:10.5901/jesr.2014.v4n7p148
- Albdour, A. A., & Altarawneh, I. I. (2014). Employee engagement and organizational commitment: Evidence from Jordan. *International Journal of Business*, 19, 192-212. Retrieved from <http://www.craig.csufresno.edu>
- Alfes, K., Truss, C., Soane, E. C., Rees, C., & Gatenby, M. (2013). The relationship between line manager behavior, perceived hrn practices, and individual performance: Examining the mediating role of engagement. *Human Resource Management*, 52, 839-859. doi:10.1002/hrm.21512
- Almutairi, D. O. (2016). The mediating effects of organizational commitment on the relationship between transformational leadership style and job performance. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 11(1), 231-241. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v11n1p231
- Andrasik, M. P., Chandler, C., Powell, B., Humes, D., Wakefield, S., Kripke, K., & Eckstein, D. (2014). Bridging the divide: HIV prevention research and black men who have sex with men. *American Journal of Public Health*, 104, 708-14. Retrieved from <https://www.apha.org/publications-and-periodicals/american-journal-of-public-health.com>

- Anitha, J. (2014). Determinants of employee engagement and their impact on employee performance. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 63, 308-323. doi:10.1108/IJPPM-01-2013-0008
- Argenti, P. A. (2017). Strategic communication in the c-suite. *International Journal of Business Communication*, 54, 146-160. doi:10.1177/2329488416687053
- Bass, B., & Avolio, B. (1996). *Manual for the multifactor leadership questionnaire*. Palo Alto, CA: Mind Garden.
- Beadle, R. (2013). Managerial work in a practice-embodying institution: The role of calling, the virtue of constancy. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 113, 679-690. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1678-2
- Bell, R. L., & Roebuck, D. (2015). An increasing usefulness for managerial communication research on the main topics of management. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice*, 16(2), 71-108. Retrieved from <http://www.na-businesspress.com>
- Bernard, H. R. (2013). *Social research methods: Qualitative and quantitative approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bhuvanaiah, T., & Raya, R. P. (2014). Employee engagement: key to organizational success. *SCMS Journal of Indian Management*, 11(4), 61-71. Retrieved from <http://www.scmsgroup.org>
- Bird, S. J. (2010). Responsible research: What is expected? *Science & Engineering Ethics*, 16, 693-696. doi:10.1007/s11948-010-9248-9

- Bromley, E., Mikesell, L., Jones, F., & Khodyakov, D. (2015). Framing health matters. From subject to participant: Ethics and the evolving role of community in health research. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*, 900-908. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2014.302403
- Brutus, S., Aguinis, H., & Wassmer, U. (2013). Self-reported limitations and future directions in scholarly reports analysis and recommendations. *Journal of Management, 39*, 48-75. doi:10.1177/0149206312455245
- Bryant, P. C., & Allen, D. G. (2013). Compensation, benefits and employee turnover HR strategies for retaining top talent. *Compensation and Benefits Review, 45*, 171-175. doi:10.1177/0886368713494342
- Burns, J. (1978). *Leadership*. New York, NY: Harper & Row.
- Cardus, M. (2013). The five levers of employee engagement. *Journal for Quality & Participation, 36*(2), 28-31. Retrieved from <http://asq.org>
- Carter, D., & Baghurst, T. (2014). The influence of servant leadership on restaurant employee engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics, 124*, 453-464. doi:10.1007/s10551-013-1882-0
- Castleberry, A. (2014). NVivo 10. *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education, 78*(1), 1-2. doi:10.5688/ajpe78125
- Cater, J. J., & Beal, B. D. (2015). Servant leadership in multigenerational family firms. *Journal of Applied Management and Entrepreneurship, 20*(4), 25-48. doi:10.9774/GLEAF.3709.2015.oc.00004

- Cho, Y., Rutherford, B. N., Friend, S. B., Hamwi, G. A., & Park, J. (2017). The role of emotions on frontline employee turnover intentions. *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, 25, 57-68. doi:10.1080/10696679.2016.1235960
- Choi Sang, L., Lim Zhi, Y., & Tan Wee, C. (2016). Analysis of the relationship between leadership styles and affective organizational commitment. *International Journal of Management, Accounting & Economics*, 3, 572-598. Retrieved from <http://www.ijmae.com>
- Choudhary, A. I., Akhtar, S. A., & Zaheer, A. (2013). Impact of transformational and servant leadership on organizational performance: A comparative analysis. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 116, 433-440. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1470-8
- Cloutier, O., Felusiak, L., Hill, C., & Pemberton-Jones, E. (2015). The importance of developing strategies for employee retention. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, 12(2), 119-129. Retrieved from <http://www.na-businesspress.com>
- Cordeiro, W. P. (2013). Small businesses ignore strategic planning at their peril. *Academy of Business Research Journal*, 3, 22-30 Retrieved from <http://www.aobronline.com>
- Dartey-Baah, K., & Ampofo, E. Y. (2015). Examining the influence of transformational and transactional leadership styles on perceived job stress among Ghanaian banking employees. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10(8), 161-170. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v10n8p161

- Dasgupta, S. A., Suar, D., & Singh, S. (2013). Impact of managerial communication styles on employees' attitudes and behaviours. *Employee Relations, 35*, 173-199. doi:10.1108/01425451311287862
- de Sousa, M. J. & van Dierendonck, D. (2014). Servant leadership and engagement in a merge process under high uncertainty. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 27*, 877-899. doi:10.1108/JOCM-07-2013-0133
- Deci, E. L. (1971). Effects of externally mediated rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 18*, 105-115. doi:10.1037/h0030644
- Deci, E. L., & Vansteenkiste, M. (2004). Self-determination theory and basic need satisfaction: Understanding human development in positive psychology. *Ricerche di Psicologia, 27*, 23–40. Retrieved from <http://www.psycnet.apa.org>
- Dhurup, M. (2015). Modeling the effects of social integration and job autonomy on job satisfaction among school sport facilitators in southern Gauteng. *Journal of Applied Business Research, 31*, 275-284. Retrieved from <http://www.cluteinstitute.com>
- Di Fabio, A. (2016). Life design and career counseling innovative outcomes. *The Career Development Quarterly, 64*(1), 35-48. doi:10.1002/cdq.12039
- Dries, N., Vantilborgh, T., & Pepermans, R. (2012). The role of learning agility and career variety in the identification and development of high potential employees. *Personnel Review, 41*, 340-358. doi:10.1108/00483481211212977

- Duff, A. J. (2013). Performance management coaching: Servant leadership and gender implications. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, *34*, 204-221. doi:10.1108/01437731311326657
- Eisele, L., Grohnert, T., Beusaert, S., & Segers, M. (2013). Employee motivation for personal development plan effectiveness. *European Journal of Training and Development*, *37*, 527-543. doi:10.1108/EJTD-02-2013-0015
- Ewerlin, D. (2013). The influence of global talent management on employer attractiveness: An experimental study. *Zeitschrift Für Personalforschung*, *27*, 279-304. Retrieved from <http://www.zfp-personalforschung.de/pmwiki.php>
- Fein, E. C., & Kulik, C. T. (2011). Safeguarding access and safeguarding meaning as strategies for achieving confidentiality. *Industrial & Organizational Psychology*, *4*, 479-481. doi:10.1111/j.1754-9434.2011.01378.x
- Feng, C., Huang, X., & Zhang, L. (2016). A multilevel study of transformational leadership, dual organizational change and innovative behavior in groups. *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, *29*, 855-877. doi:10.1108/JOCM-01-2016-0005
- Frels, R. K., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2013). Administering quantitative instruments with qualitative interviews: A mixed research approach. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, *91*, 184-194. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.2013.00085.x

- Garg, A. K., & Ramjee, D. (2013). The relationship between leadership styles and employee commitment at a parastatal company in South Africa. *The International Business & Economics Research Journal*, 12, 1411-1436. doi:10.19030/iber.v12i11.8180
- Ghosh, A. K. (2013). Employee empowerment: A strategic tool to obtain sustainable competitive advantage. *International Journal of Management*, 30, 95-107. Retrieved from <http://www.theijm.com>
- Gialuisi, O., & Coetzer, A. (2013). An exploratory investigation into voluntary employee turnover and retention in small businesses. *Small Enterprise Research*, 20, 55-68. doi:10.5172/ser.2013.20.1.55
- Gibson, S., Benson, O., & Brand, S. L. (2013). Talking about suicide: Confidentiality and anonymity in qualitative research. *Nursing Ethics*, 20, 18-29. doi:10.1177/0969733012452684
- Gonzalez-Mulé, E., Courtright, S. H., DeGeest, D., Seong, J., & Hong, D. (2016). Channeled autonomy. *Journal of Management*, 42, 2018-2033. doi:10.1177/0149206314535443
- Gözükara, I., & Simsek, Ö. F. (2016). Role of leadership in employees' work engagement: Organizational identification and job autonomy. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 11(1), 72-84. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v11n1p72

- Graves, L. M., & Luciano, M. M. (2013). Self-determination at work: Understanding the role of leader-member exchange. *Motivation and Emotion, 37*, 518-536.
doi:10.1007/s11031-012-9336-z
- Gray, D. (2013). How to mentor potential safety coaches. *Professional Safety, 58*(12), 18-19. Retrieved from <http://www.asse.org>
- Green, A. E., Miller, E. A., & Aarons, G. A. (2013). Transformational leadership moderates the relationship between emotional exhaustion and turnover intention among community mental health providers. *Community Mental Health Journal, 49*, 373-379. doi:10.1007/s10597-011-9463-0
- Greenleaf, R. K. (1970). *The servant as leader*. Indianapolis, IN: The Robert K. Greenleaf Center.
- Gupta, M., Ganguli, S., & Ponnampalani, A. (2015). Factors affecting employee engagement in India: A study on offshoring of financial services. *The Qualitative Report, 20*, 498-515. Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu>
- Gupta, N., & Sharma, V. (2016). The relationship between corporate social responsibility and employee engagement and its linkage to organizational performance: A conceptual model. *IUP Journal of Organizational Behavior, 15*(3), 59-75.
Retrieved from <http://www.iupindia.in>
- Harper, M., & Cole, P. (2012). Member checking: Can benefits be gained similar to group therapy? *The Qualitative Report, 17*, 510-517. Retrieved from <http://www.tqr.nova.edu>

- Harrison, S., & Gordon, P. A. (2014). Misconceptions of employee turnover: Evidence-based information for the retail grocery industry. *Journal of Business & Economics Research*, 12, 145-152. doi:10.19030/jber.v12i2.8528
- Hassan, S. Y., Bashir, M., Abrar, M., Baig, S. A., & Zubair, A. (2015). The impact of transformational leadership on employee's creative self-efficacy: The moderating role of cognitive diversity. *International Journal of Information, Business and Management*, 7(3), 251-262. Retrieved from <http://www.ijibm.elitehall.com>
- Hongvichit, S. (2015). The research progress and prospect of employee turnover intention. *International Business Research*, 8, 218-223. doi:10.5539/ibr.v8n6p218
- Houghton, C., Casey, D., Shaw, D., & Murphy, K. (2013). Rigour in qualitative case study research. *Nurse Researcher*, 20(4), 12-17. doi:10.7748/nr2013.03.20.4.12.e326
- Hung, C., & Wu, J. (2016). The impact of position difference on employees' organizational commitment after the merger of life insurance companies. *Emerging Markets Finance & Trade*, 52, 843-852. doi:10.1080/1540496X.2015.1117870
- Inabinett, J. M. & Ballaro, J. M. (2014). Developing an organization by predicting employee retention by matching corporate culture with employee's values: A correlation study. *Organization Development Journal*, 32(1), 55-74. Retrieved from <http://www.scimagojr.com>

- Jacob, S. A., & Furgerson, S. (2012). Writing interview protocols and conducting interviews: Tips for students new to the field of qualitative research. *Qualitative Report, 17*(42), 1-10. Retrieved from <http://www.tqr.nova.edu>
- Jansson, N. (2013). Organizational change as practice: A critical analysis. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 26*, 1003-1019. doi:10.1108/JOCM-09-2012-0152
- Jaramillo, F., Bande, B., & Varela, J. (2015). Servant leadership and ethics: A dyadic examination of supervisor behaviors and salesperson perceptions. *Journal of Personal Selling & Sales Management, 35*, 108-124. doi:10.1080/08853134.2015.1010539
- Jauhari, V., Sehgal, R., & Sehgal, P. (2013). Talent management and employee engagement: Insights from infotech enterprises ltd. *Journal of Services Research, 13*, 161-186. Retrieved from <http://www.jsr.sagepub.com>
- Jehanzeb, K., Rasheed, A., & Rasheed, M. F. (2013). Organizational commitment and turnover intentions: Impact of employee's training in private sector of Saudi Arabia. *International Journal of Business and Management, 8*(8), 79-90. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v8n8p79
- Joo, B., & Nimon, K. (2014). Two of a kind? A canonical correlational study of transformational leadership and authentic leadership. *European Journal of Training and Development, 38*, 570. doi:10.1108/EJTD-12-2013-0129

- Johansson, C., Miller, V. D., & Hamrin, S. (2014). Conceptualizing communicative leadership. *Corporate Communications, 19*, 147-165. doi:10.1108/CCIJ-02-2013-0007
- Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal, 33*, 692. doi:10.2307/256287
- Karanges, E., Beatson, A., Johnston, K., & Lings, I. (2014). Optimizing employee engagement with internal communication: A social exchange perspective. *Journal of Business Market Management, 7*, 329-353. Retrieved from <http://www.jbm-online.net>
- Kataria, A., Rastogi, R., & Garg, P. (2013). Organizational effectiveness as a function of employee engagement. *South Asian Journal of Management, 20*(4), 56-73. Retrieved from <http://www.sajm-amdisa.org>
- Katsuhiko, S. (2017). Senders' bias: How can top managers' communication improve or not improve strategy implementation?. *International Journal of Business Communication, 54*, 52-69. doi:10.1177/2329488416675449
- Kennett, P., & Lomas, T. (2015). Making meaning through mentoring: Mentors finding fulfilment at work through self-determination and self-reflection. *International Journal of Evidence Based Coaching & Mentoring, 13*(2), 29-44. Retrieved from <http://www.ijebcm.brookes.ac.uk/>

- Kerr, C. (2010). Assessing and demonstrating data saturation in qualitative inquiry supporting patient-reported outcomes research. *Expert Review of Pharmacoeconomics & Outcomes Research*, 10, 269-81. doi:10.1586/erp.10.30
- Kim, S., Egan, T. M., Kim, W., & Kim, J. (2013). The impact of managerial coaching behavior on employee work-related reactions. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 28, 315-330. doi:10.1007/s10869-013-9286-9
- Koyuncu, M., Burke, R.,J., Astakhova, M., Eren, D., & Cetin, H. (2014). Servant leadership and perceptions of service quality provided by front-line service workers in hotels in turkey. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26, 1083-1099. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-06-2013-0238
- Krishnan, V. R. (2012). Transformational leadership and personal outcomes: Empowerment as mediator. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 33, 550-563. doi:10.1108/01437731211253019
- Kumar Srivastava, A., & Sushil. (2014). Modelling drivers of adapt for effective strategy execution. *The Learning Organization*, 21, 369. doi:10.1108/tlo-08-2013-0038
- Kuo, M. C., Chang, Y., & Chang, W. C. (2014). Perceived organizational support as a mediator of managerial coaching skills and occupational commitment. *Public Administration Research*, 3(1), 17-32. doi:10.5539/par.v3n1p17
- Landis, E. A., Vick, C. L., & Novo, B. N. (2015). Employee attitudes and job satisfaction. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, 12(5), 37-42.
Retrieved from <http://www.na-businesspress.com>

- Liden, R. C., Wayne, S. J., Chenwei, L., & Meuser, J. D. (2014). Servant leadership and serving culture: Influence on individual and unit performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 57, 1434-1452. doi:10.5465/amj.2013.0034
- Linjuan, R. M., & Stacks, D. W. (2013). The impact of leadership style and employee empowerment on perceived organizational reputation. *Journal of Communication Management*, 17, 171-192. doi:10.1108/13632541311318765
- Linski, Christopher M.I.I.I., M.S.M. (2014). Transitioning to participative management. *Organization Development Journal*, 32(3), 17-26. Retrieved from <http://www.scimagojr.com>
- Lopez, E. S., & Ensari, N. (2014). The effects of leadership style, organizational outcome, and gender on attributional bias toward leaders. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 8(2), 19-37. doi:10.1002/jls.21326
- Lynch, M. F. (2013). Attachment, autonomy, and emotional reliance: A multilevel model. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 91, 301-312. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6676.2013.00098.x
- Madanagopal, D., & Thenmozhi, S. (2015). Relationship between Job Autonomy and Job Satisfaction among male employees in the ITeS Sector from Chennai City. *Annamalai International Journal of Business Studies & Research*, 1, 73-78. Retrieved from <http://www.globalimpactfactor.com>
- Marais, H. (2012). *Towards bridging the quantitative-qualitative divide in business and management research*. Paper presented at the 248-XIII.

- Marescaux, E., De Winne, S., & Sels, L. (2013). HR practices and HRM outcomes: The role of basic need satisfaction. *Personnel Review*, 42, 4-27. doi:10.1108/00483481311285200
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2014). *Designing qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Massey, K., & Campbell, N. (2013). Human resources management: Big problem for small business?. *Entrepreneurial Executive*, 18, 77-88. Retrieved from <http://www.alliedacademies.org>
- Matta, F. K., Scott, B. A., Koopman, J., & Conlon, D. E. (2015). Does seeing "eye to eye" affect work engagement and organizational citizenship behavior? A role theory perspective on lmx agreement. *Academy of Management Journal*, 58, 1686-1708. doi:10.5465/amj.2014.0106
- McKnight, L. L. (2013). Transformational leadership in the context of punctuated change. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, 10, 103-112. Retrieved from <http://www.na-businesspress.com>
- Memon, M. A., Salleh, R., Baharom, M. N. R., & Harun, H. (2014). Person-organization fit and turnover intention: The mediating role of employee engagement. *Global Business and Management Research*, 6, 205-209. Retrieved from <http://www.gbmr.ioksp.com>

- Men, L. R. (2014). Internal reputation management: The impact of authentic leadership and transparent communication. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 17, 254-272. doi:10.1057/crr.2014.14
- Mete, E. S., Sökmen, A., & Biyik, Y. (2016). The relationship between organizational commitment, organizational identification, person-organization fit and job satisfaction: A research on IT employees. *International Review of Management and Business Research*, 5, 870-901. Retrieved from <https://www.irnbrjournal.com>
- Militaru, C., & Zanfir, A. (2014). Participative management and employees' motivation in international business. *Knowledge Horizons Economics*, 6(2), 58-62. Retrieved from <http://www.jml2012.indexcopernicus.com>
- Milman, A., & Dickson, D. (2014). Employment characteristics and retention predictors among hourly employees in large US theme parks and attractions. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26, 447-469. doi:10.1108/IJCHM-04-2013-0178
- Min, K. R., Ugaddan, R. G., & Park, S. M. (2017). Is the creative tendency affected by organizational leadership and employee empowerment? An empirical analysis of U.S. federal employees. *Public Performance & Management Review*, 40, 382-408. doi:10.1080/15309576.2016.1230503

- Mishra, A. K., Mishra, K. E., & Grubb, W. L. (2015). Reducing turnover in franchise-based small business organizations: The role of trust, justice and commitment. *Small Business Institute Journal*, 11(1), 6-23. Retrieved from <http://www.sbij.org>
- Mittal, R. (2015). Charismatic and transformational leadership styles: A cross-cultural perspective. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10(3), 26-33. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v10n3p26
- Mohammed, Y. G., Fernando, M., & Caputi, P. (2013). Transformational leadership and work engagement. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 34, 532-550. doi:10.1108/LODJ-10-2011-0110
- Moon, K. (2017). The effects of diversity and transformational leadership climate on organizational citizenship behavior in the U.S. federal government: An organizational-level longitudinal study. *Public Performance & Management Review*, 40, 361-381. doi:10.1080/15309576.2016.1216002
- Mostafa, S. R., Mohsen, A. S., & Mojtaba, L. B. (2014). Interaction among intra-organizational factors effective in successful strategy execution. *Journal of Strategy and Management*, 7, 127-154. doi:10.1108/JSMA-05-2013-0032
- Mowday, R. T., Steers, R. M., & Porter, L. W. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14, 224-247. doi:10.1016/B978-0-12-509370-5.50013-7
- Moustakas, C. (1994). Phenomenological research methods. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Mozammel, S., & Haan, P. (2016). Transformational leadership and employee engagement in the banking sector in Bangladesh. *Journal of Developing Areas*, 50(6), 43-55. Retrieved from <http://www.tnstate.edu>
- Nadim, M., & Amir, B. (2015). Role of employee empowerment in boosting organizational commitment in public sector organizations of Pakistan. *Aktual'Ni Problemy Ekonomiky*, 166, 294-304. Retrieved from <http://www.publications.rwth-aachen.de/record/548864>
- Nagayoshi, S. (2015). Ontorogical level business process change for growth strategy execution. *Journal of Management Information and Decision Sciences*, 18(2), 31-53. Retrieved from <http://www.alliedacademies.org>
- Namasivayam, K., Guchait, P., & Lei, P. (2014). The influence of leader empowering behaviors and employee psychological empowerment on customer satisfaction. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26, 69-84. doi:10.1108/ijchm-11-2012-0218
- Ok, A. B., & Vandenberghe, C. (2016). Organizational and career-oriented commitment and employee development behaviors. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 31, 930-945. doi:10.1108/JMP-04-2015-0157
- Oke, A. E. (2013). Project management leadership styles of Nigerian construction professionals. *International Journal of Construction Project Management*, 5, 159-169. Retrieved from <http://www.novapublishers.com>

- O'Reilly, M., & Parker, N. (2013). 'Unsatisfactory saturation': A critical exploration of the notion of saturated sample sizes in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research, 13*, 190-197. doi:10.1177/1468794112446106
- Ortega-Parra, A., & Miguel Ángel Sastre-Castillo. (2013). Impact of perceived corporate culture on organizational commitment. *Management Decision, 51*, 1071-1083. doi:10.1108/MD-08-2012-0599
- Pande, S., & Dhar, U. (2014). Organization conditions enabling employee empowerment and the moderating role of individual personalities. *International Journal of Business and Management, 9*(10), 70-76. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v9n10p70
- Parker, S. L., Jimmieson, N. L., & Amiot, C. E. (2016). Reactions to changes in work control: Implications for self-determined and non-self-determined individuals. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 21*, 455-467. doi:10.1037/a0040022
- Parris, D. L., & Peachey, J. W. (2013). A systematic literature review of servant leadership theory in organizational contexts. *Journal of Business Ethics, 113*, 377-393. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1322-6
- Parumasur, S. B., & Govender, P. (2013). Participative management as a critical ingredient for TQM. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies, 5*, 740-751. Retrieved from <http://www.ifrnd.org>
- Pawar, I. A., & Chakravarthy, V. (2014). Factors influencing employee turnover in fusion healthcare organization. *International Journal of Management Research and Reviews, 4*, 834-846. Retrieved from <http://www.ijmrr.com>

- Poulis, K., Poulis, E., & Plakoyiannaki, E. (2013). The role of context in case study selection: An international business perspective. *International Business Review*, 22, 304–314. doi:10.1016/j.ibusrev.2012.04.00
- Radda, A. A., Majidadi, M. A., & Akanno, S. N. (2015). Employee engagement: the new model of leadership. *Indian Journal of Management Science*, 5(2), 17-26.
Retrieved from <http://www.scholarshub.net>
- Radel, R., Pelletier, L., & Sarrazin, P. (2013). Restoration processes after need thwarting: When autonomy depends on competence. *Motivation and Emotion*, 37, 234-244.
doi:10.1007/s11031-012-9308-3
- Rahman, W., & Nas, Z. (2013). Employee development and turnover intention: Theory validation. *European Journal of Training and Development*, 37, 564-579.
doi:10.1108/EJTD-May-2012-0015
- Rainayee, R. A. (2013). Employee turnover intentions: Job stress or perceived alternative external opportunities. *International Journal of Information, Business and Management*, 5(1), 48-59. Retrieved from <http://www.ijibm.elitehall.com>
- Ramli, A., & Desa, N. M. (2014). The relationship between servant leadership and organizational commitment: The Malaysian perspectives. *International Journal of Management and Sustainability*, 3, 111-123. Retrieved from <http://www.pakinsight.com>

- Rasheed, A., Khan, S., & Ramzan, M. (2013). Antecedents and consequences of employee engagement: the case of Pakistan. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly*, 4, 183-200. Retrieved from <http://www.jbsq.org>
- Rekha, Y. C., & Reddy, C. S. S. (2014). A study on employee retention in narayana engineering college, nellore, andhra pradesh. *International Journal of Organizational Behaviour & Management Perspectives*, 3, 750-758. Retrieved from <http://www.journals.indexcopernicus.com>
- Ritter, B., Venkatraman, S., & Schlauch, C. (2014). A multi-level exploration of empowerment mediators. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 35, 649. doi:10.1108/lodj-07-2012-0085
- Rocha Pereira, H. (2012). Rigour in phenomenological research: Reflections of a novice nurse researcher. *Nurse Researcher*, 19(3), 16-19. doi:10.7748/nr2012.04.19.3.16.c9054
- Romanowska, J., Larsson, G., & Theorell, T. (2013). Effects on leaders of an art-based leadership intervention. *The Journal of Management Development*, 32, 1004-1022. doi:10.1108/JMD-02-2012-0029
- Ronald, R. (2011). Ethnography and comparative housing research. *International Journal of Housing Policy*, 11, 415-437. doi:10.1080/14616718.2011.62660
- Rothmann, S., & Welsh, C. (2013). Employee engagement: The role of psychological conditions. *Management Dynamics*, 22(1), 14-25. Retrieved from <http://www.reference.sabinet.co.za>

- Rousseau, V., Aubé, C., & Tremblay, S. (2013). Team coaching and innovation in work teams. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 34, 344-364.
doi:10.1108/LODJ-08-2011-0073
- Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist*, 55, 68-78. doi:10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68
- S, K., & Pakkeerappa, P. (2014). Participative leadership style: An effective tool for change management. *International Journal of Organizational Behaviour & Management Perspectives*, 3, 1095-1100. Retrieved from
<http://www.journals.indexcopernicus.com>
- Saeed, T., Almas, S., Anis-ul-Haq, M., & Niazi, G. (2014). Leadership styles: Relationship with conflict management styles. *International Journal of Conflict Management*, 25, 214. doi:10.1108/ijcma-12-2012-0091
- Sahin, D. R., Çubuk, D., & Uslu, T. (2014). The effect of organizational support, transformational leadership, personnel empowerment, work engagement, performance and demographical variables on the factors of psychological capital. *Emerging Markets Journal*, 3(3), 1-17. doi:10.5195/emaj.2014.49
- Salih, A., & Doll, Y. (2013). A middle management perspective on strategy implementation. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 8(22), 32-39. doi:10.5539/ijbm.v8n22p32

- Sarti, D. (2014). Leadership styles to engage employees: Evidence from human service organizations in Italy. *Journal of Workplace Learning, 26*, 202-216. doi:10.1108/JWL-09-2013-0066
- Sawa, B., & Swift, S. (2013). Developing high-performing organizations: Keys to recruiting, retaining, and developing people who make the difference. *Leadership & Management in Engineering, 13*, 96-100. doi:10.1061/(ASCE)LM.1943-5630.0000218
- Schuh, S. C., Zhang, X., & Tian, P. (2013). For the good or the bad? Interactive effects of transformational leadership with moral and authoritarian leadership behaviors. *Journal of Business Ethics, 116*, 629-640. doi:10.1007/s10551-012-1486-0
- Shahid, A., & Azhar, S. M. (2013). Gaining employee commitment: Linking to organizational effectiveness. *Journal of Management Research, 5*, 250-268.
Retrieved from <http://www.ijmbr.org>
- Shokri-Ghasabeh, M., & Chileshe, N. (2014). Knowledge management. *Construction Innovation, 14*, 108-134. doi:10.1108/CI-06-2013-0026
- Smitha, S. A. (2013). A study on employee engagement in cochin international airport limited. *Drishtikon : A Management Journal, 4*(1), 24-47. Retrieved from <http://www.publishingindia.com>
- Sobottka, E. A. (2016). Commitment and regulation. Ethics in research and the human sciences. *International Journal of Action Research, 12*, 116-143.
doi:10.1688/IJAR-2016-02

- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Starks, H., & Trinidad, S. B. (2007). Choose your method: A comparison of phenomenology, discourse analysis, and grounded theory. *Qualitative Health Research, 17*, 1372-1380. doi:10.1177/1049732307307031
- Sudha, K. S., Shahnawaz, M. G., & Farhat, A. (2016). Leadership styles, leader's effectiveness and well-being: Exploring collective efficacy as a mediator. *Vision, 20*, 111-120. doi:10.1177/0972262916637260
- Swarnalatha, C., & Prasanna, T. (2013). Leveraging employee engagement for competitive advantage: HR's strategic role. *Global Journal of Commerce & Management Perspective, 2*(1), 1-6. Retrieved from <http://www.gifre.org>
- Tan, B. U. (2016). The role of work centrality in the relationship between work alienation and organisational commitment: A study of Turkish SMEs. *Journal for East European Management Studies, 21*(1), 60-81. doi:10.1688/JEEMS-2016-Ucanok
- Tanner, G., & Otto, K. (2016). Superior–subordinate communication during organizational change: under which conditions does high-quality communication become important. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 27*, 2183-2201. doi:10.1080/09585192.2015.1090470
- Thompson, K., & Webber, J. K. (2016). Leadership best practices and employee performance: a phenomenological telecommunication industry study. *Global Conference on Business and Finance Proceedings, 11*(1) 60-72. Retrieved from <http://www.theibfr.com>

- Thanyawatpornkul, R., Siengthai, S., & Johri, L. M. (2016). Employee's perspective towards strategy execution in facility management in Thailand. *Facilities*, 34, 682-702. doi:10.1108/F-09-2014-0071
- Tillott, S., Walsh, K., & Moxham, L. (2013). Encouraging engagement at work to improve retention. *Nursing Management*, 19(10), 27-31. doi:10.7748/nm2013.03.19.10.27.e697
- Tromp, D. M., & Blomme, R. J. (2014). Leadership style and negative work-home interference in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 26, 85-106. Retrieved from <http://www.emeraldinsight.com>
- Trusty, J. (2011). Quantitative articles: Developing studies for publication in counseling journals. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 89, 261-267. doi:10.1002/j.1556-6678.2011.tb00087.x
- Turaga, R. (2016). Organizational Models of Effective Communication. *IUP Journal of Soft Skills*, 10(2), 56-65. Retrieved from <http://www.iupindia.in>
- Udovicic, A., Pozega, Z., & Crnkovic, B. (2014). Analysis of leadership styles in Croatia. *Ekonomski Vjesnik*, 27, 71-80. Retrieved from <http://www.hrcak.srce.hr>
- Ukil, M. I. (2016). the impact of employee empowerment on employee satisfaction and service quality: Empirical evidence from financial enterprizes in Bangladesh. *Business: Theory & Practice*, 17, 178-189. doi:10.3846/btp.2016.651

- Ünal, Z. M., & Turgut, T. (2015). The buzzword: Employee engagement. Does person-organization fit contribute to employee engagement? *Iranian Journal of Management Studies*, 8, 157-179. Retrieved from <http://www.ijms.ut.ac.ir>
- V, R. T. (2013). Investment in employee retention as a means of achieving the strategic business objectives of the organization: an overview. *International Journal of Organizational Behaviour & Management Perspectives*, 2, 499-504. Retrieved from <http://www.journals.indexcopernicus.com>
- Vansteenkiste, M., & Ryan, R. M. (2013). On psychological growth and vulnerability: Basic psychological need satisfaction and need frustration as a unifying principle. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 23, 263–280. doi:10.1037/a0032359
- Verhulst, E., & Boks, C. (2014). Employee empowerment for sustainable design. *The Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, 2014(55), 73-101. doi:10.9774/gleaf.4700.2014.se.00008
- Vidal-Salazar, M., Ferrón-Vílchez, V., & Córdón-Pozo, E. (2012). Coaching: An effective practice for business competitiveness. *Competitiveness Review*, 22, 423-433. doi:10.1108/10595421211266302
- Vnoučková, L. (2016). Personality attitudes affecting employee learning and development: prerequisites of behaviour leading to learning and development. *Quality Innovation Prosperity / Kvalita Inovácia Prosperita*, 20(2), 22-38. doi:10.12776/QIP.V20I2.714

- Voica, O., & Vasile, M. (2013). Leadership evidences: Communication and the organizational change success. *Manager, 17*, 245-253. Retrieved from <http://www.manager.unibuc.ro>
- Walker, J. L. (2012). Research column. The use of saturation in qualitative research. *Canadian Journal of Cardiovascular Nursing, 22*(2), 37-41. Retrieved from <http://www.pappin.com>
- Wang, Z. (2014). Perceived supervisor support and organizational citizenship behavior: The role of organizational commitment. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 5*(1), 210-214. Retrieved from <http://www.ijbssnet.com>
- Washington, R. R., Sutton, C. D., & Sauser, W. I. Jr. (2014). How distinct is servant leadership theory? Empirical comparisons with competing theories. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics, 11*(1), 11-25. Retrieved from <http://www.na-businesspress.com>
- Yenen, V. Z., Öztürk, M. H., & Çigdem Kaya. (2014). The effects of organizational communication on organizational commitment and an application. *Australian Journal of Business and Management Research, 4*(3), 9-23. Retrieved from <http://www.ajbmr.com>
- Yin, R. K. (2011). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. Guilford Press.
- Yin, R. K. (2013). Validity and generalization in future case study evaluations. *Evaluation, 19*, 321-332. doi:10.1177/1356389013497081
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

- Yingying, Z., & Qing, M. (2014). Servant leadership and affective commitment in the Chinese public sector: The mediating role of perceived organizational support. *Psychological Reports, 115*, 381-395. doi:10.2466/01.21.PR0.115c23z4
- You-De, D., You-Yu, D., Kuan-Yang, C., & Hui-Chun, W. (2013). Transformational vs transactional leadership: Which is better? *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 25*, 760-778. doi:10.1037/e610182012-002
- Yu, C., Jannasch-Pennell, A., & DiGangi, S. (2011). Compatibility between text mining and qualitative research in the perspectives of grounded theory content analysis, and reliability. *The Qualitative Report, 16*, 730-744. Retrieved from <http://www.tqr.nova.edu>
- Zehir, C., Akyuz, B., Eren, M. S., & Turhan, G. (2013). The indirect effects of servant leadership behavior on organizational citizenship behavior and job performance: Organizational justice as a mediator. *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science, 2*(3), 1-13. Retrieved from <http://www.ijbssnet.com>
- Zhijun, C., Jing, Z., & Mingjian, Z. (2015). How does a servant leader fuel the service fire? A multilevel model of servant leadership, individual self identity, group competition climate, and customer service performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 100*, 511-521. doi:10.1037/a0038036
- Zwingmann, I., Wegge, J., Wolf, S., Rudolf, M., Schmidt, M., & Richter, P. (2014). Is transformational leadership healthy for employees? A multilevel analysis in 16

nations. *Zeitschrift Für Personalforschung*, 28, 24-51. Retrieved from
<http://www.zfp-personalforschung.de/de>

Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. What do you believe causes employees to become disengaged in their job?
2. How does employee engagement affect employee retention?
3. Describe some interactions you have had with disengaged employees and what you did to try to get those employees engaged.
4. In your current role and past roles, what strategies have managers used to engage employees?
5. What strategies do you use to engage your employees? How are those strategies working?
6. What type of evidence do you look for to know if you are successfully engaging employees?
7. What type of training have you received on engaging employees?
8. Describe the emphasis your superiors or the company overall puts on employee engagement?
9. How does the emphasis on employee engagement of your superior and the company overall affect retention in your organization?
10. What additional information, if any, do you feel is pertinent to this study that may not have been addressed in the interview questions?