



Employee Engagement Strategies in Five-Star Hotels: A Path to Retention

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the reasons that drive out employees in the five star hotels within Kolkata to the related fields, and is also concerned with the retention measures. The study is a synthesis of the findings of scholarly articles, industry reports, and state publications on the topic through the descriptive research design which is a secondary data analysis. Competitive pay, career growth, work-life, and job satisfaction are also crucial reasons that have led to staff switching (Gupta and Singh, 2019; Kaur and Singh, 2021). The discussion suggests that the hotel industry is facing significant challenges associated with employee recruitment and retention amid the growing rivalry among sectors related to the hotel industry, which often offer more attractive working conditions (Nair and Patel, 2022; Tiwari and Jha, 2019).

The study determines successful retention practices such as the innovative working arrangements, professional development, and employee reward schemes to cut down employee turnover (Lalwani and Sharma, 2023; Mishra and Gupta, 2020). By creating a more attractive work environment, which considers these basic components, Hotels will maximize the level of satisfaction among employees and organizational performance. The study will add value to the understanding of the dynamic of employee movement in the hotel business and present viable recommendations on the strategies that can be adopted to enhance retention in the five-star hotels.



INTRODUCTION

In the past few years, there has been a substantial migration of employees in the hospitality industry, especially at the five-star hotels, to the allied sectors of event management, tourism, and facilities management. This movement has especially become apparent in more recent years. This trend is being motivated by a variety of factors such as dissatisfaction with professional advancement opportunities, deficiency of work-life balance, and inadequate employer compensation. Lalwani and Sharma (2023) argue that a lack of proper career advancement pathways in luxury hotels prompts motivated employees and seeks jobs elsewhere that offer higher advancement opportunities and other types of working conditions. Moreover, Mishra and Gupta (2020) report that irregular working hours and stress during the season of peak demand result in employee burnouts and makes many seek companies that offer better pay and more adaptable hours.

The propensity of those who quit five-star hotels to join related industries is on ascendancy particularly in the urban centers such as Kolkata. This shift has its origins in the highly demanding nature of the profession in the hotel business where employees tend to meet problems associated with unexpected schedules and poor working environments as well as low pay.

Mishra and Gupta (2020) have discovered that the hospitality industry often subjects its workforce to stressful circumstances, especially in times of high demand. This leads to high employee turnover because employees want to find jobs elsewhere where there are related areas of work that are less demanding and have structured career development (International Journal of Technology, Management and Social Sciences, IJTMSS). Moreover, Nair and Patel (2022) emphasize that some five-star hotels attempt to retain employees by suggesting attractive salaries, yet, these strategies still must be changed in certain cases, allowing the staff to leave the sector and go to those industries that offer more attractive career advancement opportunities.

The authors indicate that an organizational culture that innovation and fostering growth should be more supportive in mitigating employee turnover (Kremer and Hommond, 2013). This is especially true in the hospitality sector where most five-star hotels are lacking these environment; this has largely contributed to a talent drain in the sector to other related sectors. Workers in these industries can effectively satisfy themselves in their employment and secure their career.



By addressing the causes and effect of talent drain to their competitors, luxury hotels can be able to counter the tide of talent drain to other industries. These may involve developing career outcomes, allowing work-life balance, and launching a recognition system to recognise and reward the efforts of employees.

Literature Review

Hospitality sector is more than worried with the exodus of workers out of five star hotels into the related fields. Varied scholars have seen high level of needs on the workers in hospitality industry as well as dissatisfaction with cadre of career development, work-life balance and payment as causative agents of this tendency.

Work Life Balance and Work Conditions.

Employees in the hotel industry, especially in five star businesses, often face excessive work pressure, irregular working hours and long working hours. Mishra and Gupta (2020) argue that it has led to stress and burnout among the employees due to the rigid need to meet visitor needs, especially in the peak seasons. The lack of equilibrium between their work and personal life forces many employees to seek employment in other sectors that can give them more flexibility and manageable schedule. Similarly, Nair and Patel (2022) highlight that the non-predictive nature of the hospitality industry worsens the state of work-life balance, which is a major reason why employees are seeking new events management or tourism chances. Such fields typically provide more organized working hours and much less stress.

Benefits and Compensation

Although competitive compensation and benefits are crucial for employee retention, more is needed to avert employee migration from the hospitality sector. Although some hotels offering five-star services offer good remuneration packages, workers tend to feel the compensation in related industries to be more enticing, especially the long-term career growth, according to Lalwani and Sharma (2023). Kremer and Hommond (2013) shed more light on this by suggesting in their endeavor that organizations with more structurally and transparent compensation systems, especially where benefits are included like paid time off, healthcare and any opportunities of professional development, have a higher retention rate.

Career Advice and Professional development.



A perception that there is no career development prospects is a significant cause of turnover of the employees in five-star hotels. Numerous employees in the hospitality industry feel trapped in their jobs that do not have clear career growth or skill enhancement opportunities, resulting in dissatisfaction at work. Other areas of the industry like tourism and event management may offer more concrete career development and promotion opportunities, and thus appeal to those hospitality workers working in the same positions and feeling unchallenged. This underscores the fact that the industry should reassess its career advancement strategy.

Employee Involvement and Company Culture.

Positive organizational culture and employee engagement are both highly relevant in retaining employees. Organizations that emphasize on teamwork, nurturing and rewarding their employees stand a higher chance of maintaining workers over a longer duration. Nevertheless, hospitality sector tends to have insufficient employee engagement strategies; it has resulted in workers not feeling valued and has caused them to look elsewhere to areas where employees are regarded as an important part of success. This explains why employee engagement programs should be put in place in the industry.

Objective

- 1) Analyzes the migration patterns and employee retention strategies at five-star hotel in Kolkata.

Research Methodology

It is overarching descriptive research that thoroughly analyzed the movement of five-star hotel workers in Kolkata to related industries through sheer application of various sources of secondary data such as literature, industry reports, government sources among others.

Data Sources

1. Academic Journals: The International Journal of Hospitality Management and the International Journal of Technology, Management, and Social Sciences are the basic ones, where the main research with references to employee satisfaction and turnover is made.
2. Industry Reports: Labor market reports and Indian Hotel Association indicate the developments of wages and working conditions in the two industries.
3. White papers and case studies demonstrate working methods of hospitality retention.



Result and Analysis

Strategies for Retention

1. Clear Career Paths

One of the most important recommendations made by Lalwani and Sharma (2023) in mitigating staff migration by five-star hotels to related sectors is career paths. Employees leave when they do not see a way of progress. Increasing career development transparency enhances work happiness and loyalty as it demonstrates to employees how they might work in the company in the future. The professional development opportunities, including skill development, internal promotions, and leadership responsibilities, should be clearly defined in hotels. The given strategy will assist employees in perception of long term future with the company they work with, which reduces their wish to quit.

Hotels can also tie younger employees to the experienced employees to help them in their career development. Hotels also offer department transfers to enable employees to acquire new competencies and increase in their employability. As employees develop confidence that their potential, and abilities are honored, they tend to stay in the company instead of seeking opportunities elsewhere that are within the related circles.

2. Competitive pay and benefits.

Lalwani and Sharma (2023) and Mishra and Gupta (2020) indicate that the second key to retaining employees is competitive remuneration. Payments are inclusive of health covers, retirement packages, vacation days and bonuses. Numerous hotel staff leaves because they do not feel that the financial gains justify the workloads and working hours. Hotels can also retain employees with good rewards and wages which they offer that are equal or higher than their relative sectors.

Incentives based on performance increase and on profit-sharing designs encourage employees by linking motivation with real benefits, thus retaining employees. The discounts on traveling, professional development stipends, wellness programmes can increase employee satisfaction and loyalty. A company that invests in the finances of its workers, retains the best talents and makes a good employer in a competitive market.

3. Work-life balance initiatives



Work-life balance is a priority among employees, especially in the hospitality sector where irregular work schedules and high workloads in the hospitality industry are a common occurrence. Lalwani and Sharma (2023) and Nair and Patel (2022) conclude that work-life balance programs decrease employee turnover. When under pressure, work burns, leads to job dissatisfaction, and quitting.

Hotels can also offer flexible working hours that can help the workers to balance work and relaxation. Long and unpredictable working hours could be a source of stress and could be mitigated by providing workers with more time flexibility, part-time work, and a controlled time-off policy. Telecommuting of administrative tasks can also reduce burnout in the non-frontline staff.

4. Professional Growth Opportunities

According to Mishra and Gupta (2020), professional development enhances loyalty and lowers the turnover. A good number of hospitality employees quit to soft skills because their skills can be enhanced. Hotels can deal with this by providing structured training, workshops, and seminars and enhance staff skills. These can be leadership training, improving customer service, and event management or tourist qualification.

Interdepartmental skills enhancement will assist the hotel employees to expand their knowledge and be more flexible. As an example, shifting staff or moving them to different front desk, food and beverage, cleaning, and human service duties could assist them in acquiring new abilities and make them feel as a part of the corporation. The desire to quit the hotel business may reduce since career mobility within the organization may exists.

5. Employee Recognition Plans

Rewards and employee recognition will be used to retain. Nair and Patel (2022) emphasize the importance of employee recognition programs, which could involve official rewards and management appreciation. When the employees feel appreciated due to their hard work, there are increased employee engagement and commitment.

Recognition programs such as monthly awards to Employee of the Month or annual get-togethers can be used to encourage gratitude. Nonetheless, the informal rewards such as giving of individual thank-you cards, team building events and also acknowledging a good achievement make the workers feel valued. Another way hotels can promote workplace relationships among



its workers is to encourage them to acknowledge each other and their accomplishments.

6. Support with Mental health and well-being.

Lastly, Nair & Patel (2022) and Mishra and Gupta (2020) suggest retention due to mental health and well-being support to the employees. It is not easy and fun in the hospitality industry. Stress management, wellness programs, and counseling can enhance the well-being of the employees and reduce the turnover.

Hotels can also provide employees with break rooms, gym, workout programs, and mental health care. Such well-being hotel cultures can reduce burnout among the staff and enhance service and work environment.

Conclusion

Career progression, financial security, work-life balance, career development, employee acknowledgement and well based approaches to these five star hotels are all possible when it comes to making their work places attractive, supportive, and interesting. The tactics enhance retention, employee happiness, and organizational success because they aim at addressing different areas of employee experience.

Career growth

Hotels that have specific career ladders motivate the staff to stay as they might be assured of career growth. Formal career development enables employees to have a sense of interest and identity since their efforts are valuable. Mentorship, Leadership development Programs and promotion opportunities assist staff in the hotel to have a vision of their future in the industry, but not necessarily in event management or tourism (Lalwani and Sharma, 2023). This makes people more loyal, reduces the turnover and assists hotels to maintain staff members.

Compensation

Favorable remuneration will make the workers feel that their work is valued. Competitive salaries, health insurance, retirement plans, and incentives in the hotels can be remarkable in a competitive labor force. Feeling that they are rightfully compensated on their skills and effort leads to an increase in motivation and loyalty, and reduces the appeal of moving to related fields with superior remuneration or improved workplace conditions (Mishra & Gupta, 2020).



Work-Life Balance

Working in hospitality, especially in five-star hotels, is stressful, as it has long working days and fluctuating shifts. Adaptable work times, specially allocated days off, and balanced shift rotation can contribute to the happiness of the employees. Burnout can also be avoided by offering part-time or remote job to non-guest facing occupations. By establishing a healthy work-life balance, hotels have the chance to compete with other associated industries that offer regular employee working hours and reduced stress (Nair and Patel, 2022). Such balance is crucial in hiring and retaining flexible, personal-time workers.

Professional Growth

Employees are more loyal when they believe that their company is concerned about their progress. The training, cross-departmental rotations, and skill development are other ways that hotels demonstrate themselves as caring about employee development. Such initiatives enhance employees competency and enhance organizational talent pool. Leadership or hotel management qualifications make employees feel that their careers are being advanced and there is no inclination to shift to other sectors to find better opportunities (Mishra and Gupta, 2020).

Honor and gratitude

Acknowledgment encourages and enhances the working culture. Workers feel valued when they receive prizes, rewards or even being recognized by everybody because of the hard work that they have done. Appreciation enhances morale and allegiance. Hotels that have employee recognition systems including peer-peer recognition maintain more employees since they are more content and related to the company (Nair and Patel, 2022). Workers who are undervalued have a greater motivation of leaving the company to places they believe they are highly valued.

Well-being and Mental Health Support.

Mental health support enhances tenacity within the stressful hospitality sector. Hotel staff assistance, stress management course, and workplace health exercises indicate their concern about the health of their employees. Intellectual and emotional assistance of workers decreases burnout and raises industry retention. Compared to allied industries, where work conditions might require the absence of support, wellness programs can end up making hospitality jobs more sustainable and favorable (Mishra and Gupta, 2020).



Workplace Performance

Proper retention practices are valuable to the hotel, not just employee satisfaction. An engaged and devoted staff boosts organizational success. Employees in the hospitality industry feel respected, supported and challenged to excel in their profession and thus more productive, better motivated to offer better services when they feel respected and supported. Reduced turnover can save on costs to recruit and train, enhancing efficiency and stability in running business. Investing in employees helps hotels to boost their staff satisfaction and guarantee an uninterrupted level of quality services, which is critical in five-star hospitality.

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