CHALLENGES AND STRATEGIES FOR RETAINING WOMEN TALENT IN IT INDUSTRY

“Managerial Strategies for Reducing women voluntary Turnover in the Workplace”

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ABSTRACT

Retaining women talent over a potential career span of 30 years is a common challenge for organizations. Except perhaps public sector enterprises, most companies are facing a situation where the business case for diversity is well acknowledged but the various means deployed to achieve it are proving ineffective as shown by statistics. Losing talented employees can cost an organization in a variety of ways. The organization might lose clients, there may be team disruptions, other employees might be influenced toward leaving the business, and a loss in productivity may occur. As the corporate world is a subset of the society, change is taking place albeit at a slow and steady pace. The need of the hour is to examine the challenges in detail and explore strategies which are being used with some degree of success.

Keywords: Attrition, Retention, Issues, Challenges and Strategies.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The women employee attrition springs up as a vital issue in IT businesses. Women Employee Attrition is one of the most critical problems which Indian IT industry faces today. Since IT industries are the economic backbone on providing much needed foreign currency inflow to our country, it is the need of the time to improve the level of satisfaction among the women IT employees. Married women employees who are working in the night shift face many problems from family, society and even health problems and there is no safety for women an employee working in night shift. The women’s has to get more support from the society and family members to work and to become more dynamic in the society. Time to time, employee surveys are done to figure out what makes employees to love or hate their employer. Based on these surveys, IT companies those who want to retain their women employees take appropriate steps with hope of reducing the attrition. Career development is a key retention driver; ‘culture’ in addition to compensation keeps people engaged at the lower levels. Providing salary hikes in accordance with industrial standards and recruiting the women those who have long-term orientation towards the organization will reduce the level of attrition.

This is an interesting fact that some companies are inherently immune to attrition, whereas some companies fail to control attrition despite desperate efforts. It is the most costly and seemingly intractable human resource challenges confronting organizations. Women attrition represents significant costs to most organizations. It is odd, therefore, that many organizations neither measure such costs nor have targets or plans to reduce them. With focus on recruitment, compensation, training & development, supervision and motivation, the research will point out the extent of women employee attrition and its causes in an organization, especially in Techno Park.

Why retention of women employees a challenge?

An employee is an invaluable resource for an organization. Considerable time, effort and funds are spent in finding and developing this resource. The organization in turn expects good performance, loyalty, ethical behaviour and adherence to policies. Yet we let go an employee easily. In case of women employees, organizations cannot afford to be complacent.

Perhaps the business manager feels there are easy replacements available in the market. This may not be true in case of women candidates. All new hiring comes at a cost- project time loss, loss of business contacts and a risk attached to it. Further some investment has already been made in the exiting employee’s development and training.

If the employee is unable to meet expectations, we need to investigate where the problem lies. Is the selection process to blame? If an employee started off as a good performer in her earlier role / job, why has performance declined? Has something changed in the work or personal environment? Are the Manager and the team providing adequate encouragement and co-operation?

Even for extremely talented women employees surprisingly little is done to retain. Perhaps the need is to help them deal with life stage changes and provide support at crucial times. The Manager may be uncomfortable in dealing with a lady team member. There may even be resentment in the team itself around availing flexibility options. Hostile work environment is a valid reason for exit. Thus retaining women talent is not solely about policies and ratios. With this paper, we hope to provide some answers to this persistent problem.
2. CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

- Traditional roles- some roles are still considered unsuitable for girls
- Change in environment from campus: They face a huge change in environment from campus to the workplace partly due to emphasis on academics alone in education system.
- Lack of role models and protected environment at home lead to lack of maturity and confidence in asserting themselves and in dealing with male managers
- Landmark events in personal life –marriage etc.
- Lack of clarity and aspirations with respect to career goals
- Increasing load both at work and at home so dual pressure
- Inability to manage after return from maternity: year after return from leave is crucial with high risk of exit. Women are having children later when at middle level.
- Personal issues of child care, spouse relocation etc. Paternity support is tokenism
- Biased culture -Bias with respect to ability to manage work- life and perception of being ‘pampered’
- Challenges on home front are still there with husband also very busy, adolescent children and old parents
- Change in priorities-(why am I doing this, am well off) & health issues mean stress takes greater toll. Likely to listen their heart, want to give back and need more “me time”.
- Increased assertiveness- system has made them more assertive, dislike repetition & need challenges to motivate.
- Lots of job opportunities available
- Lack of top team commitment for women leadership

3. INNOVATIVE BEST MANAGERIAL STRATEGIES

Another revelation during these roundtables was that there are some innovative practices that have been successfully implemented in various organizations to curb the loss of female talent.

Junior level:
- Connect with families at the time of confirmation (like parents visit)
- Opportunities for subsidized higher education

3.1. Middle level:
- Leadership programs to groom women who value it as an investment from the organization
- Structured policy/program on flexible options during the return from maternity phase
- Move ‘back-from-maternity’ women to ‘day shift’ as a rule
- Offer childcare in the work premises

3.2. Senior executives:
- Structured coaching interventions for senior women to help them with professional/personal career challenges
- Gender diversity linked KRAs for leadership team ensuring personal attention to the organizational goal on diversity.
3.3. Work-Life Balance as Part of an Employee Retention Strategy
Small and midsize business owners need to retain their top-performing employees to thrive. In addition to salary, the work environment is also a major factor when employees are deciding whether or not to stay with your firm.

In the effort to create a positive work environment that makes employees want to stay, smaller businesses often have an edge over big firms in the ability to be more creative with policies that address work-life balance, including flexible work arrangements. Consider some ways you can offer employees low-cost benefits they will deeply appreciate.

3.4. Stop Office Rumours in Their Tracks
Whether you like it or not, a grapevine exists in your small business and it always will. But although you cannot stop office rumours altogether, you do have the ability to limit the grapevine's potential for demotivating staff by feeding it accurate information that reinforces company messages.

To stimulate the flow of good news, start sharing important information faster. As soon as big news happens in your company, someone somewhere knows about it. And soon the number of people in the know multiplies. You need to acknowledge what's going on and tackle business communication issues right away, before the message becomes distorted. Just think about the "telephone" game, where one person whispers a message in the ear of the next person, who then repeats it to the following person. By the time the message travels through the chain, it ends up totally distorted.

4. CONCLUSION
The study throws light through valuable suggestion to increase the female employees’ retention in the organization. This study can help the management to find the weaker parts of the female employee feels towards the existing organization retention strategies and also helps in converting those weaker part in to stronger by providing the optimum suggestions or solutions. This study is a clear guide for the solution seeker about the factors which induced women employees to stay back in the same organization. Special attention has been shown in this research about their empowerment in the society economically as well as professionally. Career development is an existing trend to be stay in their organization and how these factors induced them; all those answers will be make this research unique and an find an enhanced approach towards balancing gender at workplace.

REFERENCES

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