

The Impact of Hybrid Working Models on Employee Engagement

Authors : Sibylle Tellenbach, Julie Haddock-Millar, Francis Bidault

Abstract : The aim of this research is to understand the extent to which hybrid working models have influenced employee engagement in the Swiss financial sector. The context for this research is the transition out of the pandemic and the changes that have occurred between 2020 and 2023. Since the pandemic, many financial services companies have had to rethink their working model for office-based employees, as this group of employees has been able to experience a new way of working and, thus, greater freedom and flexibility. For a large number of companies, it was a huge change to shift from the traditional office-based to a new hybrid working model. A heightened focus on employee engagement has become a necessity in order to understand and respond to the challenges presented by the shift in a working model. This new way of working, partly office-based and partly virtual, has led to ambiguities about the impact on the engagement of hybrid teams. Therefore, the research question is: How hybrid working models have influenced employee engagement to what extent? The methodological approach is a narrative inquiry with four similar functional teams within four Swiss financial companies. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with managers from middle management and their individual team members. The findings will demonstrate whether this shift in the working model influenced individual team members' engagement and to what extent. The contribution of this research is two-fold. First, the research makes a theoretical contribution, presenting evidence of the impact of hybrid working on individual team members' engagement in a specific sector and context, enhancing current knowledge on the challenges in working model transition. Second, this research will make a practice-based contribution, recommending ways to enhance the engagement of hybrid teams in a specific context. These recommendations may be applied in wider sectors and teams.

Keywords : employee engagement, hybrid teams, hybrid working models, Swiss financial sector, team engagement

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