

Employee Engagement in Corporate Dental Clinics: An Incredible Challenge

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ABSTRACT

The Indian healthcare sector is expected to reach US\$ 100 billion by 2015 from the current US\$ 65 billion, growing at around 20 per cent a year, according to rating agency Fitch. Some of the major factors driving the growth in the sector include increasing population, growing lifestyle related health issues, cheaper costs for treatment, thrust in medical tourism, improving health insurance penetration, increasing disposable income, government initiatives and focus on Public Private Partnership (PPP) models. Companies – the corporate dental clinics announced their presence with a view to providing comprehensive dental care by specialized professionals. With further expansion of the group Companies diversified into the fields of Contemporary Dental Education, Research and Dental Project Consultancy services and tie up with New York University College of Dentistry. This report gives comprehensive details of challenges ahead of Top Management to maintain ownership of employees as since 2008; healthcare industry particularly in Dentistry; particularly in Maharashtra started adopting new dimensions with new world class treatments and technologies. The Risk ahead of Top Management of Companies has been that their staffs are attracted by other giant Single person private practitioners at large and how it is tackled by Companies Top Management. This paper focuses on current situation in Corporate Dental Clinics and the role top management commitments for the corporate sustainability.

Key Words: Aesthetic Dentistry, Corporate Dental Clinics, Sense of Ownership.

Introduction

The paper covers comprehensive details of challenges ahead of Top Management to maintain ownership of employees. Top Management has put up special efforts by segregating employees in three groups such as Dentists, Non-Medicos Managers and Technicians & Housekeeping staff.

Employee Engagement an overview

In a prosperous society, you really have only two assets: people—their creativity and skills—and the ecosystem around them. Both need to be carefully tended.” –Mats Lederhausen, former senior executive of McDonald’s Corporation[i]

Engagement reflects alignment of each employee’s very personal goals and drivers of job satisfaction with the organization’s strategy and contribution requirements. Organizations need to provide clear objectives and a work environment that recognizes the value of their employees. Yet retention and engagement aren’t achieved through organization -wide work/life policies, talent management systems or culture initiatives alone. And, realistically, if employees themselves aren’t clear on what they do well and what matters most to them, it’s unlikely that any work situation will engage them. (It’s the “*You can’t get what you want if you don’t know what you’re looking for*” dilemma.) Managers can make a difference, but not if they themselves aren’t crystal clear on what the organization needs or their well-intentioned coaching misses the mark.

Companies have been a different platform in Healthcare Industry in India. These are system based organizations committed towards providing world class dental services under one roof. Regular adoption and application of new treatment techniques and technologies, involves regular training to staff and appraisal of the same. The staff is not only highly trained but also well educated must be termed as highly polished. The staffs gains appreciation of patients/customers and cause strong referral business.

As motioned above since 2008-09, Maharashtra state started experiencing different and professional approach towards society in dentistry. Private practitioners (Single chair Dentists) have regenerated and brought up their professional level at least to Top class and International level too. It includes highly hygienic, cleaned, systematic and painless dental services, aesthetic dentistry etc. It was and still the USP of Companies – Mumbai, has been copied by several other dentists in Mumbai and Maharashtra.

For private practitioners, they find it difficult to train the staff and educate. Therefore for them, Companies staff including doctors, admin personnel and other technical and housekeeping is the readymade package. It has been experienced that such activities are encouraged by Private practitioners. To make it a stumbling block, Top Management of Companies is quite committed towards holistic development of every staff member and to ensure its ownership towards company. It is to be noticed carefully, whatever parameters, dreams were offered for engagement of employees in such circumstances; worked almost with great certainty and has been making every single staff member to be more determined towards company.

Three major segments are used for staff division to understand, parameters offered on regular basis to keep staffs' eye fixed upon their current organization and development of the same. Such exceptional fashion has caused Companies to obtain international award "Best Place to Work".

Objectives

The researchers intend to study the following objectives to know the role of top management and responses from the employees:

1. To study Top Managements' perception and integrity towards staff and customer success.
2. To analyse employees' response to parameters applied by Top Management for Employee Engagement.

Research Methodology

This paper is piece of primary data collected by conducting telephonic interviews with Top Management(9) of the companies and technicians & housekeeping staff(82); and E-questionnaire to dentists (54) situated in selected cities such as Mumbai, Nasik, Pune, and Kolhapur & Navi Mumbai. Total sample size was One Hundred and Forty five. And secondary data includes Books, Journals, Articles and Internet to add better elegant flavor. To explore data collection and analysis, Descriptive qualitative research methodology and statistical tools were applied.

Discussion

The entire staff was segregated in three major areas and different parameters were applied timely to keep the employee engaged for long term. Following details help to understand current scenario of how Top management kept on launching new parameters and accordingly staff responded to them.

"Sensational Induction Program is terrific conduct to generate "Exceptional Sense of Ownership" among the staff members".

First segment is Dentists: Following parameters have been used by the Top Management to maintain long term association of the dentists along with the organization.

Offering International Post Graduate Courses in association with foreign University:

Dentistry has been turning out as an Artistic work than any technical work. Amplified dentists in Maharashtra and India, find every single juncture as a tough competition to sustain their positions in the market. The dentists who are the part and parcel of such corporate houses carry strong demand to join any single chair dentist with lesser work/office timings and great freedom. But there are extremely less chances to enhance the potential and technical hands-on with new and upcoming treatment techniques to be learnt and applied by the dentists while working with a single chair dentist. Apart from that providing facilities of those dentists wish to migrate from India to some other western countries or European countries, such post graduation courses are valid and more authentic and find economic for move. Therefore dentists always think of continuing with the same organization for long term and produce the best in the interest of the organization.

Article presentation/publication with International and National Journals.

Regular association with top class dentists, different and critical cases, patients along with different treatment styles, dentists start building with their potential and intellectual capacity. Representation of your experiences and ideas enhances confidence of any employee, therefore motivating and imparting training to write articles and publication of the same, makes every dentist think very seriously that Top management of my organization cares me every time. Such publication has been made compulsory part of company policies and marks special appearance during appraisals of the staff. It is a golden opportunity to start building your individual brand within the market.

Regular training for new dental treatment techniques and technologies.

Competition within and outside organization, maintaining world class standard to sustain customer satisfaction and generation of business, it forces and requires to train dentists with new dental treatments and technologies appeared, launched in the market. Regular training with new appliances; generates confidence among the dentists and makes them realise “Feel Rich Factor”. It is a regular attempt to keep on polishing the technical hand.

Participation with International and National Dental conferences and Events:

Top management sincerely cares the interest and understands potential of the dentists. The concept “Management” has reached and gained new honour towards getting the work done. Organization and participation with National and International Dental conferences, provides not only great opportunity to interact with highly specialized and world class dentists but also hidden potential of dentists is fetched to maximum level. Such activities help to generate team means “WE” attitude, kill the “EGO” among the dentists and bring them a new picture of life.

Opportunity to turn Director, provided performance is exceptional:

During the appraisal procedure, HR and CEO/MD or any Top Management fellow holds one and one dialogs with each and every dentist. Each one is made realised with positive, improved areas of dentists along with the areas have more scope to improve. Here few candidates who have been exceptional with their performance for the few years; are formally informed about new responsibilities as a member of Top Management is shared. Such dialogs/appreciation definitely generates a great sense of responsibilities and ownership.

Instead of salary increase; incentive scheme is launched against monthly turnover:

New and diverse financial tactics are used to motivate the employees. Past experience tells that most of the time, when business is in full swing and dentists are paid with regular salaries, research explores the feeling of dentists that they are earning little short. To lock such negative thought processes, Top Management decided to go for incentive scheme. Every single employee was asked for its opinion and then it was signalled green. The incentives are shared among the dentists with their seniority against the monthly financial turn over.

Involvement with Staff Training Department:

Top Management is very keen and particular hitting upon the hidden talent of the dentists. The dentists who have extreme technical hands on and tremendous knowledge with dental treatments are asked whether they would turn internal and external trainers to train dentists, technicians, non-technical mates within the organization. Also the dentists with excellent communication skills are offered the opportunity to turn trainer. It makes solid impact among the dentists that they become more serious about the job and focuses more on “The Best” productivity at the end of the day and causes long relationship with the organization.

Involvement with Top Management Decisions

Top Management believes that every person can contribute in more than one area. Such corporate dental clinics, their environment, culture within the organization helps to bring out concealed talent among the dentists. Also Top Management is very keen paying respect to seniors and juniors by asking them to participate with management decisions.

It is another attempt by Top Management to generate sense of belongingness among the dentists.

Transfer within the organization is possible:

Top Management tries to maintain flexibility and hence maintains the interest of dentist to continue with great endeavours. The transfer does not only focus on branch to branch switch over but inter-departmental transfer plays vital role maintaining employees interest. Viz. If any dentist has been working with training and development cell, may wish to work with Research department, such transfers are signalled green with no hesitation.

Discount with treatment charges to Doctors as staff members to themselves and their family members as well

Economical aspect turns the game either on or off. In the same manner, highly negative employee changes mind to continue with same organization when he/she finds that all the dental treatments are at enormously low cost has been made available. He/She thinks first of his/her family and about him/her self. This move has also caused better employee engagement.

Opportunity to work in Western and European countries:

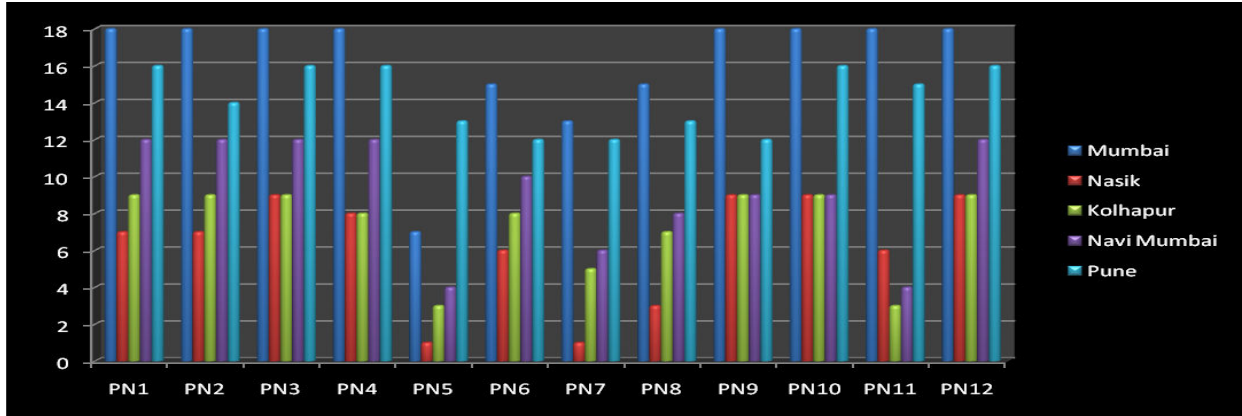
The most appealing area of such corporate dental clinics are continues dental education and International exposure through Post Graduation courses and short term training programs at regular basis. Therefore the dentists who wish to migrate from India to some other country find easy placement.

First priority is offered to sort out any issue or any promotional activity

It is another speciality of Top Management that it has kept the entire organization doctor centric. Therefore in issue exploring of complaint, dissatisfaction or appreciation, promotion, dentists are given first priority. This is called strong backing where dentist finds the place well secured and decides to continue for long and work even much better for the organization.

Table-1: Dentists responded to parameters used by Top Management for Employee Engagement

Sr No.	Parameters	Mumbai	Nasik	Kolhapur	Navi Mumbai	Pune
	Total Working Dentist in City	18	9	9	12	16
1	Offering International Post Graduate Courses in association with foreign University	18	7	9	12	16
2	Article Presentation/Publication with National & International Journals.	18	7	9	12	14
3	Regular Training for New Treatment Techniques & Technologies.	18	9	9	12	16
4	Participation with National & International Conferences & Events.	18	8	8	12	16
5	Opportunity to turn Director if performed exceptionally well.	7	1	3	4	13
6	Instead of salary increase, incentives are offered against monthly Branch turnover.	15	6	8	10	12
7	Involvement with staff training department.	13	1	5	6	12
8	Involvement with Top Management Decisions.	15	3	7	8	13
9	Transfer within the organization is possible.	18	9	9	9	12
10	Discount with treatment charges to Doctors as staff members to themselves and their family members as well.	18	9	9	9	16
11	Opportunity to work in Western & Europe Countries.	18	6	3	4	15
12	First Priority is offered to sort out problem or any promotional activity.	18	9	9	12	16



Graph-1: Dentists responded to parameters used by Top Management for Employee Engagement

Table No 1 and Graph No.1 explain that the parameters applied by Top Management in various cities, Mumbai, Navi Mumbai along with Pune Dentists responded them positively and continued their assured associations with the organizations. Whereas few dentists of Nasik and Kolhapur put off their decisions against the parameters but kept association with organization.

Second segment is Administration Manager, Branch Managers, Account Department, Operation & Marketing Managers and assistants etc.: Following parameters have been used by the Top Management to maintain long term association of the Non-Medico Managers along with the organization

Motivation for further studies and private courses

No organization runs with the similar types of people or calibre. Specialised human resources are to be employed and made sure that they can be looked after delicately. As for dentists there is policy for continual dental education, but for non-medico people they too wish to learn and grow. Therefore Top Management allows for any further post graduation or private courses. Sometimes Organization motivates employees by sponsoring the entire course. Here is an attempt to continue making and maintaining team of specialized professionals.

Participation with designing HR and Marketing strategies with Top Management

Top Management seriously work on every single employee particularly non-medico. Normally highly energetic professionals are hired for Managerial positions. Their competencies are studied by top management and accordingly slowly these professionals are asked to mark their participation on regular basis designing HR and Marketing strategies.

OB and other Training Programs

Every single endeavour is to turn World class brand, Top Management conducts training program focusing on Organizational Behaviour and Inter-personal relationship and customer care etc. Such training programs produce fantastic results in terms of solid bonding among the teams and finally strong foot falls and business generation as customer feel and experience the world class service beyond traditional perceptions and conceptions. It is definitely a feel rich factor for non-medico human resources within the organization.

Regular dialogs by MD and CEO

It is another attempt keeping the momentum going on as either CEO or MD hold regular personal dialogs on monthly or weekly basis, which restrain personal along with family enquiry, appreciation for particular or regular chores, future plan discussion, any other market stories. The study tells that on having such dialogs, such non-medicos but managers get the feeling that they are always noticed, their words are valued and they are paid respect. So engagement of such class assured more than 100 per cent.

Instead of Salary increment; incentives scheme is launched against Monthly Turnover

If business success is up to the mark, every one would expect to be economically better than the past. Therefore instead of salary increment according to company policy better to introduce incentive scheme so that such class can be benefitted with larger amount. It also caused employees to continue and announce greater performance for the organization.

Discount with treatment charges to staff members and their family members as well

As mentioned above, economical aspect plays vital role. But in case of such non-medicos and particularly Managerial human resources, these people have taken it very seriously as they really want their family to get benefitted with world class treatment and facilities.

Involvement with Staff Training Department

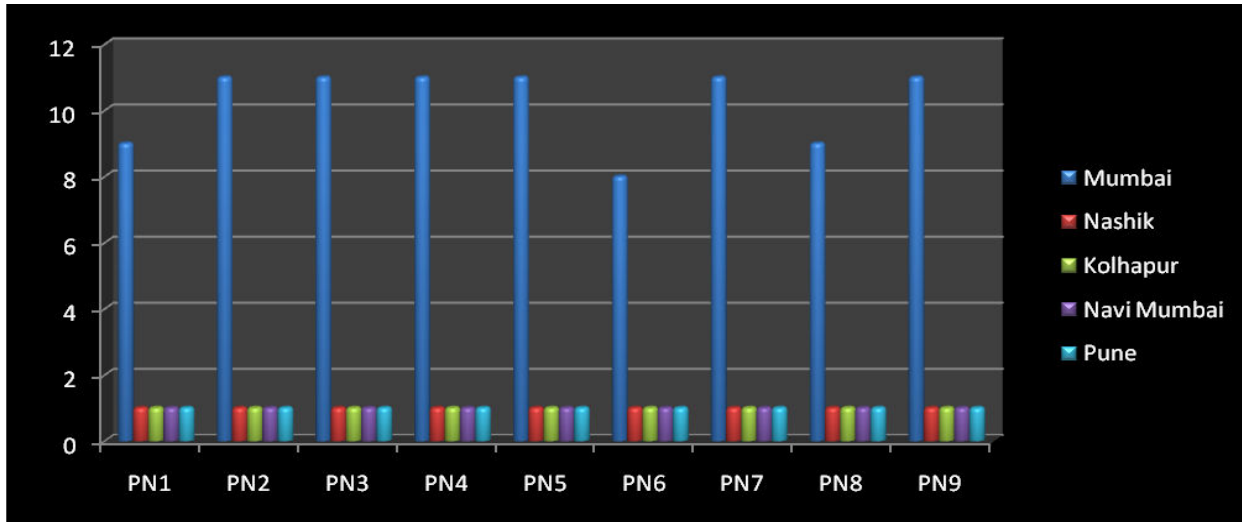
These people are motivated and offered an opportunity to be the part of Training and Development cell. Here top management brings freedom to employees to design training modules, make necessary changes with previous training module and style. It generates terrific sense of responsibility towards organization within the staff. So engagement and better productivity is assured.

Transfer within the organization is possible

Here, it is a totally different story as these people can be transferred from one Branch to another branch only. Head office people can switch from Operations to HR, HR to Marketing, Marketing to Administration, Front desk to Marketing etc. Study tells that such conduct of transfer has increased rate of employee term of engagement with the organization.

Table-2: Non-Medico Managerial Staff responded to parameters used by Top Management for Employee Engagement:

Sr. No.	Parameters	Mumbai	Nasik	Kolhapur	Navi Mumbai	Pune
	Total Non-Medico Managerial Staff in City	11	1	1	1	1
1	Opportunity to turn Executive Directors, Regional Managers etc	9	1	1	1	1
2	Motivation for further studies and private courses.	11	1	1	1	1
3	Participation with designing HR & Marketing strategies with Top Management.	11	1	1	1	1
4	OB & other training programs.	11	1	1	1	1
5	Regular Dialogs with MD & CEO.	11	1	1	1	1
6	Instead of salary increment; incentives scheme is launched against with Top Management.	8	1	1	1	1
7	Discount with treatment to Staff members and their family members as well.	11	1	1	1	1
8	Involvement with Staff Training Department.	9	1	1	1	1
9	Transfer within the organization is possible.	11	1	1	1	1



Graph-2: Non-Medico Managerial Staff responded to parameters used by Top Management for Employee Management

Table No 2 and Graph No.2 tell that the parameters applied by Top Management almost all the Non-Medico Managers responded positively. The reason and perception is that Non-Medicos experienced the similar culture as seen in other regular organizations.

Third segments is Technicians and Housekeeping staff: Following parameters have been used by the Top Management to maintain long term association of the Technicians and Housekeeping staff along with the organization

While selecting and placing people for such jobs following criteria are worked on:

1. The candidate must be 12th cleared/unclear.
2. Must be needy of the job.
3. Family background and
4. Previous experience.

The organization invests lot of money and time to develop such people to achieve company vision and mission by hook or crook. Apart from that contemplating the race and competition in the market, such well trained, educated technicians and housekeeping people carry solid demand by other dental clinics or hospitals. Therefore the most major role Top Management has to play is to keep such people happy all the time and engaged forever. Following parameters are used.

Assistance to improve standard of living of the staff by offering considerable salary along with regular personal counselling

At the time of institution of such staff, they are screened intensely and accordingly salary is offered. These are kind of people, even if they are provided with more than sufficient facilities or liberty but still carry lot of negativity and complex of working with highly professional people. Therefore regular counselling takes place in the organization. Study tells that such attempts have changed the ideology of such staff and they have made their bonding extremely strong with the organization happily.

English, OB, Technical & Computer Training Sessions are offered

Fear factor, complex, family and economical background of such staff puts lot of challenges before the Management as these people are terribly weak in behaviour, mannerism and other areas such as computers and most important is English. Therefore attempt is made regularly that these people are trained with organizational behaviour, Inter-personal relationship, technical areas and basic computer knowledge along with internet facility. Such training programs have played crucial role changing the ideology of such staff from negative to positive. Also improved behaviour of such staff has always gained the appreciation of the customers and has caused better business generation means increased number of patients.

Better performers are awarded and promoted by offering additional responsibility of Staff Training and Development

Normally it has been observed and experienced that after certain period these people turn stagnant or start planning to join any single chair dentist for better comfort zone job. To keep the mind set of such people geared up positively, to keep their improved professional level maintained, Top Management started to ask staff members having excellent or better level of technical hand to become or to shoulder the responsibility in modifying old training modules and preparing new training modules. Such attempts have caused removal of negative thoughts and strong generation of sense of responsibility and long term engagement is assured.

Massive discount with treatment charges to such people:

These are economically highly weak people. They cannot afford any dental treatment inside or outside. Therefore considering the same, Top Management has offered massive discount with all dental treatments to family members of technicians and housekeeping staff and themselves as

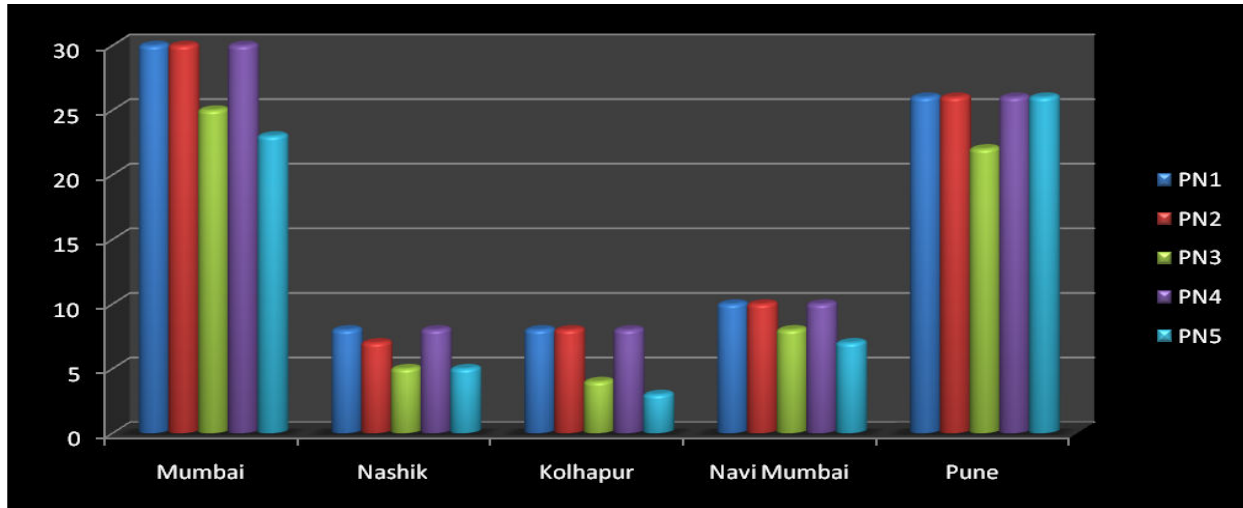
well. This attempt has changed the approach towards Company and Top management. This has resulted remarkable engagement of such staff along with greater productivity.

Along with Salary increment; incentive scheme is launched against monthly turn over

This parameter was too used for these staff members as they could earn better as others earn. Initially there were many rebellions; once they experienced the regular increased and flexible money; changed their mind and supported incentive scheme. The average ownership of the staff is around 14 to 15 years with the organization.

Table-3: Technicians and Housekeeping staff responded to parameters used by Top Management for Employee Engagement.

Sr. No.	Parameters	Mumbai	Nasik	Kolhapur	Navi Mumbai	Pune
	Total Technicians And Housekeeping	30	8	8	10	26
1	Assistance to improve standard of living of staff by offering considerable salary along with personal counseling.	30	8	8	10	26
2	English, OB, Technical training sessions are offered	30	7	8	10	26
3	Better performers are awarded and promoted by offering additional responsibility of Staff Training & Development.	25	5	4	8	22
4	Massive discount with treatment charges to such people.	30	8	8	10	26
5	Along with salary increment; incentives scheme is launched against monthly turn over.	23	5	3	7	26



Graph-3: Technicians and Housekeeping staff responded to parameters used by Top Management for Employee Engagement.

Table No 3 and Graph No.2 tell that the parameters applied by Top Management for technicians and housekeeping staff, Mumbai, Pune and Navi Mumbai staff contemplated it positively and assured their association with the organization whereas Nasik and Kolhapur technicians and housekeeping staff was and still in Two minds; but have kept association with the organization.

Findings

1. Organization is Doctor centric. Even if parameters are applied keeping all segment employees satisfied. But first priority in any case is assured to Dentist only.
2. The parameters have been used; has produced better result in keeping employees engaged for long term and has increased productivity and business generation as well.
3. World class brand has been established as employees have been performing exceptionally fantastic.
4. Employees' engagement and excellent performance level maintained by employees' credits to achievement of International award "Best Place to work".

Suggestions

1. In spite of constant focus on employee equality; first priority is provided to Dentists. It is to be avoided as Non-medicos, and other staff members cause failure to efforts put up by Top Management for long term engagement.
2. To maintain highly professional performance level, Top Management to think and decide seriously to conduct all the necessary training programs on regular basis instead of once in a year to all the staff members.

Conclusion

Launch of regular parameters by Top Management shows the high level of integrity towards employees. Contended staff brings greater generation of business and prolonged customer satisfaction.

Such platforms are extreme necessity of society in all aspect. Motivation to lead, sorting out employment issues within the society and society to continue getting benefitted with world class dental treatments. Retaining good employees is a tough challenge of every organizations' Top Management and here Top Management has been putting regular efforts for best people to stay with the organization and has gained better result in employee engagement. But the fact must be accepted; dealing with different human behaviour shades is always a tough and an incredible challenge before Management.

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