What it takes to achieve sustained team loyalty

Business, Entrepreneurship



Today, businesses are forced to confront unfavorable economic conditions, technological imperatives and demographic shifts in catering to shifting markets. In such a world where nothing is sure, creating teamloyaltyor employee stickiness is essential, and an outcome born of many elements that marry people, purpose and process.

To scratch the surface, let's look at four of the many factors that I have personally understood to help create sustained team loyalty:

Recognizing the best in everyone:

We have become a knowledge society – one which is increasingly getting institutionalized. At the centre of this is the knowledge worker. In a time of easy access to resources and capital, the traditional factors of production — land, labor and capital — are being redefined.

We believe that mutuality recognition comes from making the employee own up his task that is embedded in larger organization-wide processes that demands both entrepreneurial and collaborative thinking. Entrepreneurial thinking has become necessary, given the demands of the markets. At its core lies the idea of pursuing opportunity despite the limitations imposed by controlled resources.

Traditional processes or definition of jobs has given way to focus on outcomes and the need and ability for employees to be able to influence and impact outcomes has become essential. This also means that the organization is willing to underwrite the known risks of initiatives by employees making suitable tradeoffs where necessary.

Creating a sense of ownership:

While the need to influence outcomes is important, a sense of ownership is necessary, too. Ownership goes hand in hand with autonomy. However, autonomy -- whether at an individual level or at a departmental level -- without collaboration can have negative fallouts.

Thus, the overall alignment with the purpose of organization goals is critical. At times of fundamental conflict, the simplest question to pose is: What is in the interest of the company? This chain of causation is a circle, where we build commitment to outcomes.

This in turn, depends on fostering ownership of tasks, functions processes which in turn demands administrative autonomy and access to resources. And this is embedded in resource tradeoffs that have impacts across processes and functions within the organization, and demand collaboration and negotiation to keep congruence with the overall plans and purpose.

Unity in diversity:

In terms of background, in a retail setup such as ours, people couldn't be more diverse, with distinctly different backgrounds and educational levels. While some people have grown from the trade, others have worked in large multinational corporations. Income and educational backgrounds are equally diverse, which have led to increased learning and understanding within the system.

Growth process:

The ability to grow within any organization is critical. This is not only welcomed but actively encouraged. To give you an example with ORRA, a cashier in our store in Mumbai moved to sales to production to heading a store in south India, to ultimately becoming the sales head, south India.

Of course, assessment of skill sets and new learning and training are part of the process. Apart from professional growth, increments, promotions, and bonuses are an open process.

Transparency of performance and balance sheet means the ability to collectively decide what the outcome should be.