

THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE APPROACH: A NEW HR PERSPECTIVE OR JUST ANOTHER BUZZWORD?

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Introdução

Employee experience (EX) is the employees' perception of their relationship with the organization they work for. The EX approach reframes this relationship, focusing on the employee instead of the process and applying design thinking and customer experience principles along with the relevant tools. Even with the growing presence of EX in organizations, academic research is still limited. Among the articles that address EX, most discuss its relevance and guidelines, and only one presents field research results.

Problema de Pesquisa e Objetivo

The aim of this research is to explore why EX approaches are adopted, and what are the initiatives implemented regarding EX, challenges faced during the process, and the results obtained. It is important to point out that this paper focuses on the employee experience approach as defined above, so, we did not include authors that use this expression in other contexts (Alshathry, Clarke, & Goodman, 2017; Chen & Fulmer, 2016; Edgar & Geare, 2014; Farndale & Kelliher, 2013; Jaiswal, Arun, & Varma, 2021; McLeod & Tetzlaff, 2016; Prouska, McKearney, Opute, Tungtakanpoung, & Brewster, 2021).

Fundamentação Teórica

We start by briefly presenting the foundations of employee experience: customer experience and design thinking. Then, we make a connection with the employee experience concept and dimensions. There is a consensus that employee experience is the employee perception about their relationship with the organization they work for (Maylett & Wride, 2017; Morgan, 2017; Plaskoff, 2017). Based on the literature, we identified the factors that contribute to great EX and then we grouped into five dimensions: culture and leadership, HR practices, work and assignments, technology, and physical space.

Metodologia

We conducted an exploratory qualitative research, due to the emergent nature of our topic, and collected the data through semi-structured interviews. Based on the literature review and our research objectives, we developed an interview guide consisting of six open questions. The criteria to select the interviewees were: (a) to work for a company with a structured EX project, (b) to be involved with the EX project. In total, we conducted eleven interviews, of which nine were with representatives from organizations and two were with consultants with extensive experience in EX.

Análise dos Resultados

Different companies had various rationales for adopting the EX approach, for example, the employer brand initiative, to contribute to a company strategy, cope with talent competition, or to solve problems. Most companies that participated in this research are in the early stages of deployment of the EX approach, focusing primarily on the selection process, onboarding, and peripheral actions, such as dress code and flexible hours. Regarding the evaluation and measurement of experience, the use of quantitative and qualitative research has been reported by some interviewees.

Conclusão

There is an opportunity for Human Resources to grow and learn about design thinking and co-creation, which can help develop a mindset from the perspective of employee experience. Although some of the interviewed companies have a mindset focused on process review, in other companies the EX initiatives promoted a new perspective to understand and improve the employees' relationship with the organization. Like any organizational change, the EX is part of a cultural change and must be included and worked on strategically and consistently in the context of organizational development processes.

Referências Bibliográficas

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