

## **A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY ON PREVAILING HIGH INVOLVEMENT WORK PRACTICES FOR ORGANISATION SUCCESS; A LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVE**

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### **Abstract**

Every organisation big or small aspires for success and success comes to organisation only through efficient productivity , and Productivity can be brought in only by the “truly engaged employees. Truly engaged employees not only plan to stick around—helping to lower the replacement and recruiting costs, they are real assets of the organisation as they are always enthused and motivated to impact the bottom line. When the organisation is in distress or low and in difficult times their energy and effort can help the organization to not only survive, but thrive and succeed. Strategically developed organizations visualize through their strategic insight into their employees, utilize their talents without limitations. This maximize the job satisfaction, improves morale and employee retention because the organization is staffed with a workforce of people who are highly productive, skilled and committed to doing their very best. They will volunteer their involvement to a high level and consequently lead it to success.

**Keywords ; High Involvement, Work Practices, Employee Engagement, Productivity, Strategic, organization.**

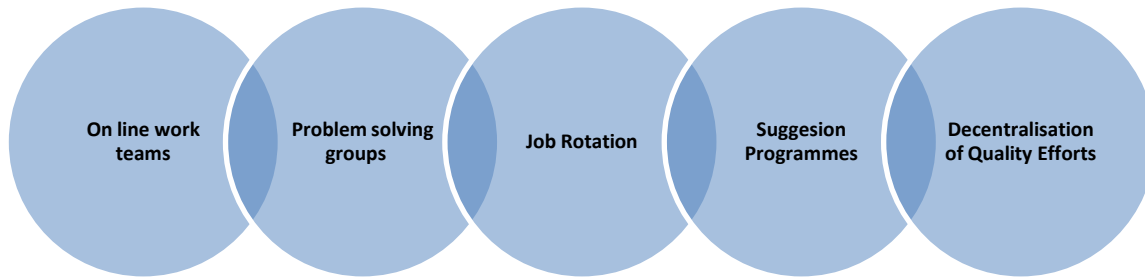
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## Introduction

High involvement when compared with traditional production systems, the organizations utilizing high-involvement practices showed superior performance. In addition, workers in the high-involvement plants showed more positive attitudes, including trust, organizational commitment and intrinsic enjoyment of the work. High involvement work practices empowers employee and improves productivity. Research in the area of high-involvement work practices have come out with findings a high level of employee engagement can be critically important to competitiveness in the contemporary business environment. The Gallop Organization, which studied employee engagement in 7,939 business units in 36 companies, found that employee engagement was positively associated with performance in a variety of areas, including increased customer satisfaction, profitability and productivity, and reduced employee turnover. The breadth of employee engagement was substantial. About 2/3 of the business units scoring above the median on employee engagement also scored above the median on performance, while only about 1/3 of companies below the median on employee engagement scored above the median on performance (Harter, Schmidt & Hayes, 2002).

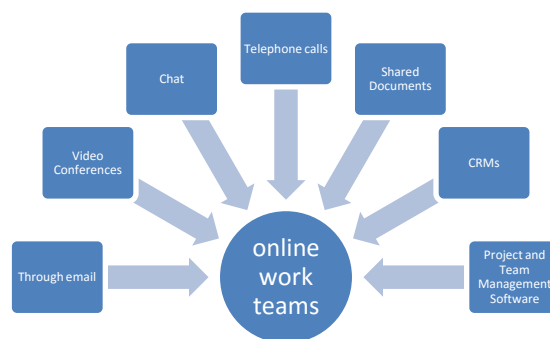
**The basic question and framework for this study; Clarification** on why Still High Involvement Work Practices Fail needs profound research and this study would try to seek few clarifications keep in mind the advancements taken so far with a recent definition framed. Frits K. Pil, professor and research scientist at the University of Pittsburgh, and John Paul MacDuffie, professor of management at Wharton, explore the diffusion and use of best practice work systems in manufacturing in a new study. Despite clear evidence that high-involvement work practices and policies result in superior quality and productivity, the authors find tremendous variation in the use of such practices. **Pil and MacDuffie define "high-involvement" work systems as having combinations of five characteristics: On-line work teams, problem-solving groups, job rotation, suggestion programs, and decentralization of quality efforts.** Research has shown that implementing any or all of these work practices can result in considerable improvement in overall performance, especially in labor-intensive settings such as manufacturing. Improved quality, higher productivity, lower scrap rates, and lower turnover are just some of the results seen when these work practices are used successfully.



**Figure; 1; Concept of High Involvement Systems; Source; Peter Cappelli, director of the Center for Human Resources at Wharton – Graph Source; Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

**Let us evaluate with findings from the current practices the FIVE characteristics of High Involvement Systems designed by Pil and MacDuffie;**

**Online work teams like shared work space with online work teams**, present a new way of doing the work towards a common objective and still remain in **different geographic locations** simultaneously in **different time zones**. Hence this team with virtual space, nullifying distance and almost removes physical place in order to do work, most importantly only one click away from linking up and meeting for work. There are different types of offsite work teams like, **remote work** as company's main office, but whose workers work outside of the head offices alongside the online team like the salespeople or care providers. The **Virtual work** people like designers, programmers and those on virtual or online marketing with **tools that allow online working**.



**Figure;2; Graphical Concept of “Online Work Teams” of HPS ; Concept Designed; Prof Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

This type of work teams are special, and contribute from on-line just with and their ability to perform their specific duties and tasks depends on other types of media such as: Email, Video-conferences, Chat, Telephone calls, Shared documents, CRMs, Project and team management software.



**Figure; 3 ; Sub Concept of “Online work team” depicting qualities of “Successful Virtual Team; Source; Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

**The success of the Virtual team will yield results and for a successful virtual teams the 8 tips will contribute they are:** Hold a **personalized initial meeting** to clearly set, out **expectations and objectives**, Establish some **basic guidelines** for work and relations from the outset, Establish common and realistic **goals**, Maintain **active communication** at all levels and channels of the team, Facilitate a **feedback process** that helps to improve work quality, Implement **motivation strategies** that help to humanize the virtual medium and

strengthen teamwork, Hold **virtual meetings** with the whole team to strengthen cohesion and synergy, Offer **ergonomic guidance** to look out for the health and well-being of the team.

**Problem Solving Groups**; the Second Component HPS Problem Solving Groups in present industrial scenario. The work as a part of a group work often leaves many feeling frustrated. A large amount of problem solving takes place in group settings. Meetings and informal discussions are often used to air different ideas and points of view to help solve problems for which the participants have either shared responsibility or a contribution to make. However, most of the time full advantage of these situations is difficult to measure. It needs to be used at the right time and in the right way, group problem solving can be the most effective way of solving some problems.



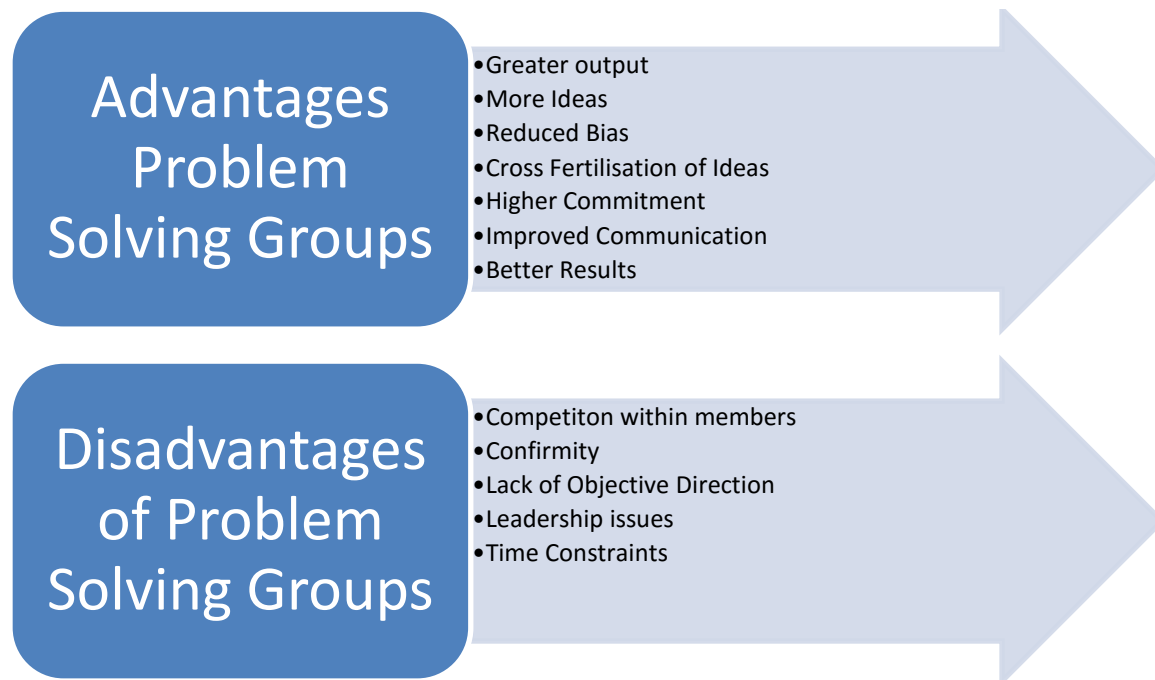
**Figure; 4 ; Cocept Sub Component of HPS ; Characteristics of Problem Solving Group ; Source; www.wikipedia.org**

When working, people together will be influenced by each other. This increases significant efficiency of group problem solving. The analysis of **Advantages and disadvantages of using a group to solve a problem can highlight the importance: The advantages** of group problem solving can include, **greater output**; number of people involved, each with differing experience,

knowledge, points of view and values, adds a larger number and variety of ideas for solving a problem can be produced. **Cross fertilization of ideas like the** exchange of ideas can act as a stimulus to the imagination, encouraging individuals to explore ideas they would not otherwise consider. **Reduced bias** the shared responsibility of a group in arriving at decisions can encourage individuals to explore seemingly unrealistic ideas and to challenge accepted ways of doing things. Individual biases and prejudices can be challenged by the group, forcing the individual to recognise them. Group pressure can also encourage individuals to accept that change is needed. **Increased risk taking** Shared responsibility makes individuals more willing to take risks. The discussion of different points of view also helps the group to be more realistic in assessing the risks associated with particular courses of action. **Higher commitment** When goals are agreed it gives a common purpose to the group, within which individuals can gain a feeling of self-determination and recognition through their contribution. Individuals who have contributed to finding a solution feel a greater commitment to its successful implementation. **Improved communication;** When people who are affected by a problem or who will be involved in implementation are involved in finding a solution, they will know how and why that particular solution was chosen. Also, people with knowledge relevant to the problem can communicate that knowledge directly if they participate in solving the problem. **Better solutions;** Groups of individuals can bring a broad range of ideas, knowledge and skills to bear on a problem. This creates a stimulating interaction of diverse ideas which results in a wider range and better quality of solutions.

The disadvantages of group problem solving can include; **Competition;** Most people working in a group unconsciously perceive the situation as competitive. This generates behaviour which is destructive and drains the creative energy of the group. For example, we often perceive disagreement with our ideas as a put-down. The natural reaction is to regain our self-esteem, often by trying to sabotage the ideas of those who disagreed with us. Instead of looking for ways to improve on their ideas we choose to destroy them. Eager to express our own ideas, we may totally ignore what others are suggesting. Power-seekers may use ploys such as highlighting flaws in others' arguments, barbed questions and displays of expertise to show their supremacy. These types of behaviour create an atmosphere which is incompatible with effective problem solving. **Conformity;** There is a strong tendency for individuals in a group to want to conform to

the consensus. This can be for a variety of reasons, including the need to feel liked, valued or respected, and tends to make people censor their ideas accordingly. The comparative status of the individuals present also has an important influence. Senior members often want to maintain their image of being knowledgeable, while junior members want to avoid appearing the inexperienced 'upstart'. Because agreement on ideas can be gained quickly in a group setting, groups tend to select and approve solutions quickly, without exploring all the possibilities. **Lack of objective direction;** Most traditional meetings and group discussions convened to solve problems are ineffectively directed. Sometimes there is no effective leader to give direction to the discussion, with the result that it wanders aimlessly. Even when there is strong leadership, the group leader or chairman often exerts undue pressure on the direction and content of the discussion. In addition, the ideas aired during a meeting are not usually recorded, apart from the minutes and individual note-taking, with the result that many ideas are forgotten and cannot act as a constant stimulus to the discussion. **Time constraints;** Group problem solving is a relatively slow process compared with working alone. It requires individuals to come together at an agreed time, usually for about one hour, and this can cause organisational problems as well as impatience amongst participants to 'get it over with' as quickly as possible.



**Figure;5; Sub Component of HPS- Advantages /Disadvantages of Problem Solving Group;**  
**Source; Author Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

**The Third Sub Component of Job Rotation; Job rotation** is the structured interchange of workers between different jobs, rotate between different workstations or jobs at certain time intervals. Job rotation increases the variety of tasks, enlarging the physical demands and adding variety to the job, job requirements of the jobs being rotated. It's important to remember that job rotation doesn't eliminate ergonomic risk factors. While job rotation is an effective control measure for jobs that have been identified as "problem" or "high-risk" jobs, it is not desirable that ergonomic risk factors are "hidden" by administrative controls. Obviously, ergonomic problems should be addressed and fixed whenever possible. With the above "caution" being stated, it's equally important to recognize the many great benefits to implementing job rotation in the workplace. Benefits of Job Rotation. Many studies have identified a variety of benefits from implementing job rotation including: Reduced exposure to focused physical demands of one job. Reduced physiological stress, strain, and fatigue to muscle group used for one job. Reduces employee exposure to high-risk job demands, Reduced MSD incidents and severity, Increased innovation and improved work process efficiency, Improves employee skill base and increases job assignment flexibility over time. Reduced boredom and complacency, Increased productivity & quality, Reduced absenteeism & turnover.

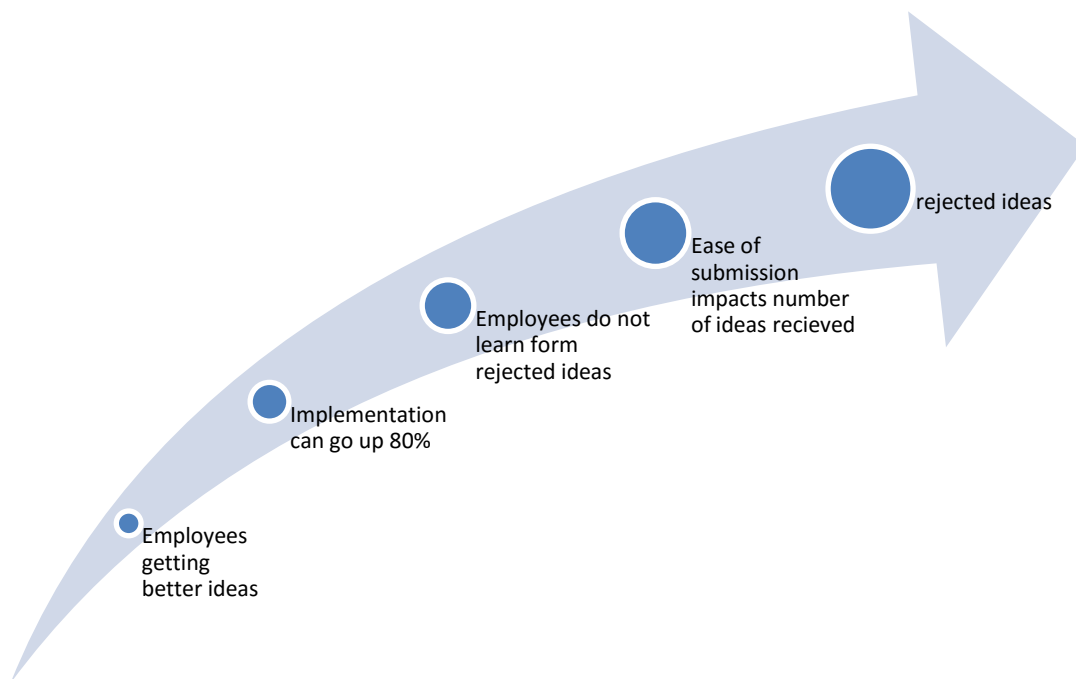
Potential Barriers to Job Rotation like several potential barriers and difficulties implementing job rotation, and jobs and departments are a good fit for job rotation and short-term productivity. Workers not wanting to rotate because they have an "easier job" and not wanting to give up "their job" to others. Workers not qualified for some jobs due to restrictions or ability. Union or other workplace policies related to job bidding and compensation. Supervisors are not convinced that the benefits are worth the perceived costs. Supervisors perceive that implementation and management of job rotation is very difficult. Group leaders and trainers tend to focus on the short term costs rather than the long-term benefits, and perceive that the costs are too high for them verses the benefits. Supervisors and group leaders not wanting to "fight" employees who don't want to rotate.

Misconceptions about Job Rotation; **Misconception #1:** "Job rotation will fix ergonomic issues."**Fact:** Job rotation is NOT a substitute for an ergonomic improvement process. **Misconception #2:** "Quality and productivity will suffer with implementation of a job rotation



program.” **Fact:** Quality and productivity gains can be realized thru an effective job rotation program. **Misconception #3:** “Job rotation is hard to manage.” **Fact:** Once effective rotations are set, job rotation is no harder to manage than regular work assignments. In fact, managers have much greater flexibility when workers are trained to perform a variety of jobs. **Misconception #4:** “Job rotation is easy to design.” **Fact:** Effective design is one of the most important and difficult aspects of a job rotation program. The rotation sequence and frequency should be based on a specialist’s evaluation of various job factors including: muscle groups used, forces, postures, repetition, sustained exertions, tools utilized, and skill / training requirements. **Misconception #5:** “Job rotation will not be accepted by management or employees.” **Fact:** While it’s true that this can be a hard sell (especially if the company safety culture is not strong), the benefits of implementing job rotation frequently exceed the costs. Managers and employees will accept this program provided that they fully understand the benefits of job rotation, and upper management is fully committed to it. Determine Jobs Suitable for Rotation; Consult management, supervisors, group leaders, safety & ergonomics team members and employees to determine which departments and jobs are suitable for a job rotation program. Job rotation can be used reactively and proactively. *Reactive* job rotation reduces employee exposure to jobs that have been identified as “high-risk” based on an objective ergonomic assessment. Rotation can be used until engineering controls are implemented. *Proactive* job rotation can be implemented to prevent muscle fatigue due to exposure to job tasks that focus the work load on single muscle groups, and for additional benefits outlined above. Select Method for Job Rotation Analysis; OSHA’s ergonomic guidelines state that if job rotation is utilized, the jobs should be reviewed by a qualified person to determine the muscle-tendon groups that are used to perform the job. A “qualified person” according to OSHA, is “One who has thorough training and experience sufficient to identify ergonomic hazards in the workplace and recommend an effective means of correction; for example, a plant engineer fully trained in ergonomics – not necessarily an ergonomist.” There is no scientifically proven system or protocol for determining job rotation guidelines and schedules. However, we have developed a semi-quantitative evaluation method of scoring job exertion which we feel is an effective tool which can be used as a means to help determine optimal job rotation sequence and schedules.

**Sub Component of HPS Benefits about managing employee idea programs;** While small organizations with up to 50 people can often walk over to the person they need to share ideas with, larger organizations with siloed departments, functional areas and geographic locations struggle to share ideas effectively and get them into the hands of the best people to evaluate and implement. **Large complex organizations will require the right technology to provide timely feedback and take action on ideas. Setting good goals is an effective way to get valuable ideas.** By aligning priorities you'll be able to evaluate and implement ideas more effectively (Read More in the Employee Idea Management Program – Goal Setting Guide). **Idea Management Programs do not become successful overnight.** For an idea management program to reach a point where evaluation and implementation becomes a smooth process could take up to three years. Use a maturity matrix to help estimate the time it takes for a suggestion box to be effective (we share the the one we use with our clients here). **So how do you create a high performance employee idea management program?** We researched 21 academic papers, added in our own insights and experiences from working with our clients to find out that it comes down to 10 factors that separate suggestion box failures from high performance ideation systems. Read more in the Employee Suggestion Box: 10 Factors that Separate Failures from High Performers.



**Figure; 6; Concept of HPS on Sourcing Ideas from employees ; Source ; Author Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

**Ideating gets better with practice**, future ideas from that employee are more likely to get implemented. This effect is compounded in a team setting. Research has shown that by the time a team has had 4 successful ideas implemented, the likelihood that future ideas would be selected for implementation rose to 80%.. Employees are more likely to learn from successful ideas but not unsuccessful ones. In other words, **employees do not learn from rejected ideas**. From a practical standpoint, it is important to show employees what a successful idea looks like by selecting desired types of ideas for implementation. **Eighty percent of an organization's performance improvement potential lies in front-line ideas**. In the debate between focussing on radical or incremental innovation, the greatest business opportunity lies with ideas related to incremental innovation. In fact, focussing on incremental innovation provides a more sustainable competitive advantage for organizations. **Ease of submission directly impacts the number of ideas received from employees**. For example, online suggestion systems receive more ideas than paper or form-based systems because there are fewer physical barriers to submitting the idea. Also, gating or asking for too much information up front can reduce the number of ideas submitted. **Lack of timely feedback is the number 1 reason why employee idea programs fail**. Every article and research piece (yes all 21 of them) sited timely feedback as a major block to the success of an employee suggestion box. Declined ideas will be taken constructively when an explanation of why the ideas were declined is provided. Simply put, **rejected ideas that have an official explanation do not impact the likelihood that someone will not submit ideas going forward**.the quantity or quality of ideas. Feedback is seen as a positive even if the idea is rejected. In one study, submitters only became disengaged after over 20 rejected ideas because feedback was provided and they knew their ideas were being evaluated. **Having monetary rewards does not increase the quantity or quality of ideas**. While different companies can have different types of reward programs (we dive deeper into examples in the Employee Suggestion Box guide), financial compensation can actually create a negative environment of competitiveness as opposed to promoting healthy debate. **Central review groups is the biggest bottleneck to the velocity of ideas**. Let's do a little bit of math. Let's say you have an above average employee suggestion box with 10% adoption and 5 ideas per employee per year. In an

organization with 2000 people that's still 1000 ideas for a committee to review. If the review committee got together twice a month, that's still over 40 ideas to fully evaluate in each meeting. There's no central review team that can process that many ideas effectively even though it's a technique frequently used to manage idea systems.

**Employee suggestion programs (also known as ESPs)** presently in the form of open forums are the ways to engage employees and involve them in the business strategy process. If organization is not implementing one before, it can be confusing to decide where to begin. In this post, we'll give you seven tips to get you started.

**Obtaining Management Confidence;** This is the first and most important first step in implementing an employee suggestion program. If company leaders aren't listening and actually implementing suggestions, employees have no reason to participate. Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) conducted a study about underutilized suggestion box programs. It notes that 36% of businesses with employee suggestion programs feel "top leaders do not see the program as a critical contributor to innovation" (R. Hastings SHRM: Employee Suggestion Programs Underutilized). If you want people to care about a program, first commit to making it work from the top down. Get the entire team excited about it and create a company culture of open communication and innovation. **Developing Internal Promotion Plan;** Suggestion boxes won't do you any good if no one's participating. Make sure employees are aware of the program and understand the benefits of participation. Have a plan for how you're going to market the program to everyone. Make sure they know about how it works and the benefits it can bring to the organization. Keeping senior management involved will help ensure that the program remains relevant. And speaking of senior management, when you first announce and launch the program, make sure the first communication comes from your CEO or de-facto leader. Glitz and glamor in marketing programs is great, but nothing beats a personal email, video or presentation by your organization's leader touting why this program is so important to an organization. That step alone will have an enormous impact on adoption. Which brings us to part three... **Make it easy to offer suggestions to keep the channel open and ideas flowing;** It's crucial to maintain a steady pace for managing ideas as they come in. Don't lose office morale with lost suggestions. Do this by setting suggestion guidelines. Make it clear. What topics are open to suggestion? Can

they submit suggestions that are part of their normal job, or are those off-limits? Are some suggestions more likely to be implemented than others? Are specific sectors in need of help?

**Ideas to start with:** Generate savings, Increase productivity, Boost morale, Eliminate waste, Improve customer satisfaction, Decrease accidents. These topics open employees up to a wider range of consideration and offer a platform to work from. Also, consider campaigns requesting ideas to specific problems or issues within the organization. Encourage members within your organization to submit ideas as a team. **Agree on Recognition and incentives for Participation;** Offering incentives or rewards for participation is a heavily debated topic. Innovation comes from motivated employees who are willing take well thought out risks. But at what promise of reward? Often it's considered that the greater the risk, the greater chance for reward. But this also offers a greater chance for failure. **Respond Quickly to Suggestions;** Acknowledging and responding to suggestions quickly reinforces the notion that employees are being heard and ideas aren't falling on deaf ears. This makes employees feel valued and increases motivation to participate. Generate discussion. Submit more suggestions. There's nothing worse to a potential contributor to have them put a great idea into a suggestion box, and to have no one even let them know "thanks for your idea." To be blunt, no feedback will be the death of your suggestion program. **Create Functional Diversity in Expert reviews;** Review teams and/or expert reviewers should include a cross-section of leaders from the organization. While senior management may seem out of touch with the workforce, they hold the power to implement change. If lower managers have to track down bosses to sign off on ideas, changes will take much longer to implement and are less likely to be seen through. Creating diversity of expert reviewers simplifies this process and increases a diversity of ideas to be considered. **Implementing Ideas;** Number seven on our list ultimately becomes the most important for managers. Suggestions only matter if they are implemented in a timely manner. Obviously, not every idea can be implemented, but managers should help employees iterate on ideas and get them ready for show time.



**Figure; 7; Fifth Component ESPs of HPS; Designed by ; Author;Prof**

**Dr.C.Karthikeyan** Decentralisation of Quality; Decentralization has been seen as a solution to problems like economic decline, government inability to fund services and their general decline in performance of overloaded services, the demands of minorities for a greater say in local governance, the general weakening legitimacy of the public sector and global and international pressure on countries with inefficient, undemocratic, overly centralized systems. "Decentralization, or decentralizing governance, refers to the restructuring or reorganization of authority so that there is a system of co-responsibility between institutions of governance at the central, regional and local levels according to the principle of subsidiarity, thus increasing the overall quality and effectiveness of the system of governance, while increasing the authority and capacities of sub-national levels." Decentralization is often linked to concepts of participation in decision-making, democracy, equality and liberty from higher authority. Decentralization enhances the democratic voice. Theorists believe that local representative authorities with actual discretionary powers are the basis of decentralization that can lead to local efficiency, equity and development." Decentralization has been described as a "counterpoint to globalization" which removes decisions from the local and national stage to the global sphere of multi-national or non-national interests. Decentralization brings decision-making back to the sub-national levels.

Decentralization strategies must account for the interrelations of global, regional, national, sub-national, and local levels.

Decentralization ideally happens as a careful, rational, and orderly process, but it often takes place during times of economic and political crisis, the fall of a regime and the resultant power struggles. Even when it happens slowly, there is a need for experimentation, testing, adjusting, and replicating successful experiments in other contexts. There is no one blueprint for decentralization since it depends on the initial state of a country and the power and views of political interests and whether they support or oppose decentralization. Decentralization usually is conscious process based on explicit policies. However, it may occur as "silent decentralization" in the absence of reforms as changes in networks, policy emphasize and resource availability lead inevitably to a more decentralized system. A variation on this is "inadvertent decentralization", when other policy innovations produce an unintended decentralization of power and resources. In both China and Russia, lower level authorities attained greater powers than intended by central authorities. **Asymmetry;**Decentralization may be uneven and "asymmetric" given any one country's population, political, ethnic and other forms of diversity. In many countries, political, economic and administrative responsibilities may be decentralized to the larger urban areas, while rural areas are administered by the central government. Decentralization of responsibilities to provinces may be limited only to those provinces or states which want or are capable of handling responsibility. Some privatization may be more appropriate to an urban than a rural area; some types of privatization may be more appropriate for some states and provinces but not others. **Measurement;**Measuring the amount of decentralization, especially politically, is difficult because different studies of it use different definitions and measurements. An OECD study quotes *Chanchal Kumar Sharma* as stating: "a true assessment of the degree of decentralization in a country can be made only if a comprehensive approach is adopted and rather than trying to simplify the syndrome of characteristics into the single dimension of autonomy, interrelationships of various dimensions of decentralization are taken into account." **Status of Decentralization;** This reform approach transfers fiscal, administrative, ownership, and political authority for health service delivery from the central Ministry of Health to alternate institutions. Proponents of decentralization suggest that the benefits of such a policy are improved efficiency and quality of services. Technical

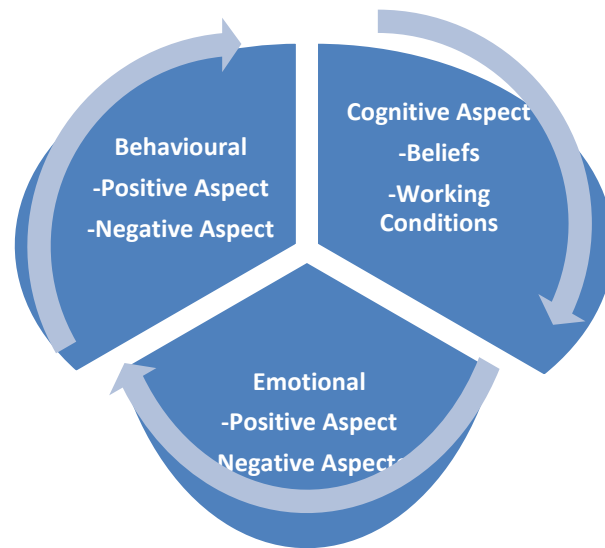
efficiency improves through greater cost consciousness at the local level. Allocative efficiency increases because local decision-makers have access to better information on local circumstances than central authorities, and they use this to tailor services and spending patterns to local needs and preferences. Quality of service improves because the public provides input on local decision-making processes and holds local decision-makers accountable for their actions. In addition, advocates of this reform approach argue that it creates space for learning, innovation, community participation and the adaptation of public services to local circumstances. Broadly, however, reports have noted that the effects of decentralization have been difficult to estimate because it requires major research effort to gather relevant data in a systematic manner over time. For example, one study, Bossert (2002), evaluated four nations with significant experience with decentralization and found that sufficient evidence does not exist to assess the impact. **Issues in Decentralization** ; Several issues constrain the intended impact of decentralization. Information asymmetry between the Ministry of Health and the lower level agencies, local politics, and capabilities of the agent are some of these issues. **Information asymmetry** -- Local governments or agencies can pursue their own agenda if central MOH is not well informed about their activities. **Local politics** -- If local powerful groups (ie insurance companies and physicians) have significant investments in health care issues, they may use their influence to limit the intended objectives of decentralization. Pokharel (2000) found that in Bangladesh the medical community strongly resisted decentralization. **Capabilities of the agent** -- If administrative and management capacity in the local government body is inadequate, decentralization may not meet its intended objectives because agents may mismanage finances and waste resources. In addition, issues that face decentralized hospitals include insufficient tax funds, difficult coordination with other health service organizations, and lack of congruence in fiscal base. Such issues are discussed in Pedersen (2002). **Insufficient tax funds** -- If a decentralized hospital provides health care to patients that do not reside in the taxed district, it can lower profits and create budgetary uncertainty for the hospital. **Coordination** -- If the hospitals are not at the same political, financial, and administrative level as other health service organizations (ie general practitioners), coordination of services is more difficult because organizations face disparate incentives. **Congruence** -- If the central government agency assigns service delivery responsibility to a local hospital, fiscal base needs to be sufficient to fund delivery of services. Other issues that are relevant to decentralized hospitals are an inadequate population



base and local political pressure. **Population base** -- If hospitals do not serve a certain population base, quality of services can deteriorate because providers will have fewer opportunities to maintain or improve their skills. Efficiency also decreases since the hospital cannot capture economies of scale. Local perspectives and local political pressures can block needed rationalization. Especially, they can block closure or shifting from acute to delivery of other type of care.

**Trends in Decentralization** ;Global trends show that there are a variety of factors that contribute to the success of decentralization. Nations planning to introduce this reform should learn from these trends and integrate the lessons into the design, implementation, and monitoring of this reform. Focusing on the global automobile industry, Pil and MacDuffie found that companies have been working assiduously to implement high-involvement work systems, but change is difficult to implement. The old way of doing things has to be unlearned, a new way learned, and then the new practices have to become routine before any positive results appear. Indeed, during the learning process, performance often drops to levels lower than those experienced prior to the change. While the long-term benefits of change may be clear, managers are often unwilling to suffer through short-term consequences. The authors found that, contrary to their expectations, a new management team was not the solution to successful change. Management teams with longer in-plant experience were more likely to introduce new work practices. In part this may be the result of a better understanding of operating methods, long-term working relationships with unions, and higher levels of employee trust. Pil and MacDuffie found that three factors drive the success of efforts to adopt high-involvement practices: The level of complementary organizational practices and technologies that enhance the benefits from the new practices (e.g. flexible automation, such as robotics, enables companies to harness the workforce flexibility of high-involvement systems in ways that hard/fixed automation does not). The performance levels the organization is achieving from its current practices. Poor performers were more likely to undertake change than mediocre performers. The latter were more likely to focus on squeezing additional performance out of existing practices. Organizational actions that alter the cost of introducing new practices. As an example, the authors found that unfreezing of existing practices happens naturally at many companies (e.g. during new product introductions), and that many organizations use these occasions to undertake change. Only a subset of these are

effective, and few companies have been successful at implementing best-practice work systems throughout their organization. Although the organizational benefits of shifting to high involvement work can be considerable, effective implementation often proves elusive. The professors stress that "Changing to high-involvement work is hard. Successful change is rare, and variance in work practice is widespread. Simply making the decision to implement suggestion boxes, job rotation, or work teams will not automatically lead to success." There is a complex interplay of plant-level, company-level, union-level, and country-level factors that influence the effective implementation of these work practices. But Pil and MacDuffie make clear that companies should engage all those involved in efforts to overcome the obstacles and implement high-involvement work systems. The long-term benefits invariably outweigh the costs. **The recent changes in concept of Employee Involvement;** Employee engagement has **three related components: a cognitive, an emotional, and a behavioral aspect.** The **cognitive aspect** of employee engagement concerns employees' **beliefs** about the organization, its **leaders, and working conditions.**



**Figure; 2; Employee Engagement Intertwined Components; Source ; Author**

### **Dr.C.Karthikeyan**

The **emotional aspect** concerns how employees feel about each of those three factors and whether they have **positive or negative attitudes** toward the organization and its leaders. The **behavioral aspect** of employee engagement is the value-added component for the organization and consists of the discretionary effort engaged employees bring to their work in the form of

**extra time, brainpower and energy** devoted to the task and the firm. There is a strong correlation between a successful company and an effective goal setting process, and successfully achieve these goals together. By including all members of the company, the stage is set for each employee to feel a greater sense of loyalty and commitment to the company and to perform at higher levels.

### **Objectives;**

- **To review the theoretical literatures on what leader do to achieve a high level of employee engagement.**
- **To evaluate whether high-involvement work practices develops positive beliefs and attitudes that lead to enhanced performance.**
- **To differentiate high- involvement work practices in both manufacturing and service settings and evidence for the effectiveness of these practices.**
- **To analyse the importance of new concept designs for concept of high involvement.**

### **Scope of the Study; To evolve employee engagement practice policy**

**Methodology;** Meta Analytical study through review of past research studies and Conceptual studies.

**Data;** Secondary Data from larger Time series analysis on Industries using high Involvement work practices

**Statement of the Problem;** Why many organizations specially in India are unable to formulate a coherent set of high-involvement work practices that are consistent across the organization, and set practicable norms to reinforce work teams to invent high involvement work practices.

**Focus of this study;** To arrive at Conceptual Clarity of best prevailing practices and formulate working models graphically than can further develop into theory or practice policies in organizations in India

### **Review of Literature on High Involvement Work Practices**

Numerous authors have developed a long list of high involvement and high performance among employees, from selecting the right people for the organization to a commitment to training and skill development, team based work organization, job security, and incentive-based pay. In each of these general categories, a variety of specific practices have been developed. For example,

incentive-based pay can take the form of a gain-sharing program, performance-contingent pay to individuals, team-based pay, or employee ownership. Training programs can be developed for current and future skills, technical and interpersonal skills, new hires and experienced employees. With all of the choices, developing a coherent set of high-involvement work practices that are consistent across the organization and reinforce each other is a nontrivial challenge for all managers.

Evidence **of the effectiveness of high-involvement work practices** has been documented in several research studies. The multivariate statistical analyses conducted on the research data introduce statistical controls for a variety of factors extant in the environment in order to rule them out as plausible alternative explanations for the findings. As a result, fairly strong inferences can be drawn regarding the impact of the high-involvement management system. The results of this research are impressive.

**The early research examined** the impact of high- involvement work systems in manufacturing organizations. The development of the Saturn Corporation within General Motors constituted a demonstration project for, “a radically new organizational form in which work would be organized into teams, work rules would be drastically simplified, and the union would be a full partner in decision making from the bottom to the top of the organization.” The project has been largely considered a success. For instance, the J. D. Power and Associates statistics on customer satisfaction showed that in 1992 and every year since, Saturn has led all U.S. car lines and all brands worldwide except for Lexus and Infiniti (Acura and Mercedes in 1997 only) in ratings of vehicle quality, reliability and satisfaction.

**Researchers and academics** have examined the implementation of the Modern Operating Agreement (MOA) between the Chrysler Corporation and the United Automobile Workers (UAW), which was signed and ratified in six Chrysler plants by 1987. The MOA reduced job classifications, tied pay to skills within those classifications, established joint consultation committees, and reorganized work into shop-floor teams.

**A survey company contacted 782 unionized production** workers at their homes 5-6 years after the signing of the MOA contracts. Sixty-four percent of those contacted stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the MOA, 68% agreed or strongly agreed that they preferred the MOA to the previous system, and 76% agreed or strongly agreed that they preferred the team system to the old system.

**Eileen Appelbaum and her colleagues (2000)** studied 15 steel mills, 17 apparel manufacturers, and 10 electronic instrument and imaging equipment producers. Their purpose was to compare traditional production systems with flexible high performance production systems involving teams, training, and incentive pay systems. In all three industries, the plants utilizing high-involvement practices showed superior performance. In addition, workers in the high-involvement plants showed more positive attitudes, including trust, organizational commitment and intrinsic enjoyment of the work.

**Larger studies have confirmed the positive effects of high-involvement work practices** in manufacturing. Jeffrey Arthur's 1994 study of 30 steel mini mills in the U.S. in 1988-89 showed that the mills with commitment systems involving more employee training and more employee participation in solving production problems had higher productivity, lower scrap rates, and lower employee turnover. John Paul MacDuffie's 1995 study of an international database examining 62 automobile assembly plants in 1989-90 found that flexible production plants with high-involvement practices such as team-based work systems, contingent compensation, and extensive employee training consistently outperformed traditional plants in terms of both productivity (labor hours per vehicle) and quality.

**In 2005, Deepak Datta and his colleagues analyzed survey responses from 132 U.S.** manufacturing firms and found that firms utilizing high-performance work systems showed significantly higher labor productivity than their competitors. More recent researchers have asked the question of whether high-involvement work practices can be generalized to the service industry sector. Once again, impressive results have been documented.

**Two studies of employees in the life insurance industry** examined the impact of employee perceptions that they had the power to make decisions, sufficient knowledge and information to do the job effectively, and rewards for high performance. Both studies included large samples of employees (3,570 employees in 49 organizations and 4,828 employees in 92 organizations). In both studies, high-involvement management practices were positively associated with employee morale, employee retention, and firm financial performance.

Another recent study has **tested high-involvement work practices in a call center** environment. In a field experiment, 149 call center employees were randomly assigned to either high involvement work practices, autonomous teams, aligned job design (essentially new performance metrics aligned with the business strategy), or the traditional management system. Findings comparing pre- and posttest scores showed substantial improvement in organizational commitment and intrinsic job satisfaction in the high-involvement work practices group compared to no change for the control group or the autonomous work team group, and impact on organizational commitment only for the aligned job design group. The high-involvement work practice group also showed the most improvement in performance on a variety of measures.

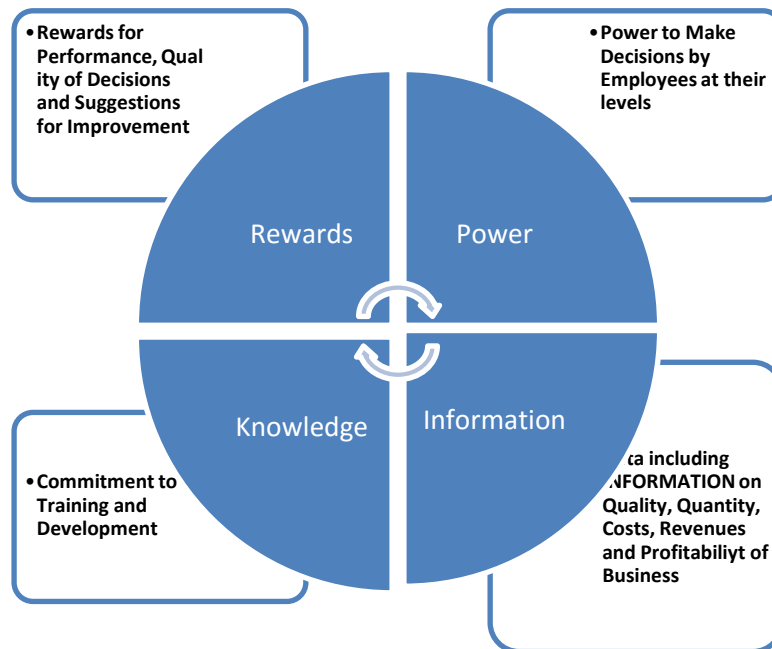
**Canadian companies were surveyed about their HR practices** in 2004- 05. Of the 896 companies receiving the survey, 155 responded (17.3%, which is about average for surveys). Three questions assessed incentive pay at the individual, group and firm level (i.e., profit-sharing). Two questions asked about team structures, specifically, self-managing teams and problem-solving or quality groups. The findings indicate a rather high level of penetration of high-involvement work practices in Canadian firms in 2004-05, even though many firms did not utilize these practices. Individual incentive pay was the most common practice, with 55% of employers providing individual incentive pay to 21-100% of their employees. Only 14% of firms indicated that none of their employees received individual incentive pay.

**Group incentives and profit-sharing were utilized less, with 33% of firms** indicating the use of group incentives and 34% indicating the use of profit-sharing for 21-100% of employees. Fifty-six percent of firms indicated that none of their employees received group incentive pay, and 50% indicated that none of their employees received profit-sharing incentives. About 20%

of firms indicated the involvement of 21- 100% of their employees in problem-solving or quality groups, while 40% indicated that none of their employees were involved in such groups. About 21% of firms indicated that 21-100% of their employees worked in self-managing teams, while 49% indicated that none of their employees worked in self-managing teams. The utilization of incentives and group structures among the 42 manufacturing firms and 104 service firms in the sample. There is greater penetration of incentive pay and team structures in the manufacturing sector than in the service sector. Specifically, 33% of manufacturing firms indicated that 21-100% of their employees were involved in problem-solving or quality groups compared to 15% of service firms. Seventy-one percent of manufacturing compared to 28% of service firms indicated the use of individual incentives for 21- 100% of their employees. Profit-sharing was more prevalent in manufacturing firms, with 38% of these firms indicating that 21-100% of their employees participated in profit-sharing plans compared to 31% of service firms. Self-managing work teams and group incentives showed about the same level of penetration in manufacturing and service firms. About 21% of both service and manufacturing firms indicated that 21-100% of their employees were organized in self-managing work teams. Forty-nine percent of service firms and 50% of manufacturing firms indicated that 21-100% of their employees received group or team incentive pay. Organizational effectiveness scholar.

Edward Lawler and his colleagues identified **four interlocking principles for building a high-involvement work system** that help to ensure that the system will be effective and that the various practices will work together to have a positive impact on employee engagement. These principles can be summed up as providing employees with **power, information, knowledge and**

rewards.



**Figure; 8 ; Four Interlocking Principles for Building a Hight-Involvement Work System;**

Concept Edward Lawler; Graph Source; Author Dr.C.Karthikeyan

**Power** means that employees have the power to make decisions that are important to their performance and to the quality of their working lives. Power can mean a relatively low level of influence, as in providing input into decisions made by others or it can mean having final authority and accountability for decisions and their outcomes. Involvement is maximized when the highest possible level of power is pushed down to the employees that have to carry out the decisions. Creating forums for employees to develop and share ideas for improving firm performance can be effective, but only when good ideas from employees actually get used. For example, Arthur and Aiman-Smith describe an employee suggestion system in a large manufacturing plant in the Midwestern U.S. with a unionized workforce of 1,500. The system was successful in generating large numbers of useful suggestions from the employees that saved the company US\$9M in its first four years. Implementation was facilitated by a joint union management review board that assessed each suggestion and either accepted, declined, or asked for further investigation.



**Information** means data, including information on the quantity and quality of business unit output, costs, revenues, profitability, and customer reactions. A major challenge for managers developing a high-involvement work system is to create an information system that provides employees with data that is timely and relevant to their particular work process, that they can influence personally by either expending or withholding effort, and that they can understand. The more transparent managers can make the firm's operations, the more effectively employees can contribute to the firm's success. Transparency is important because it helps employees see the link between their actions and the performance of the firm, thereby enhancing the cognitive aspect of engagement. Hence, transparency is essential for employees to see what they are doing that is working and what isn't. As CEO Ricardo Semler says about his 800-person high-involvement manufacturing firm in Brazil, "nothing matters more than those vital statistics – short, frank, frequent reports on how the company is doing".

**Knowledge**, or employee skills and abilities, can be distinguished from information, which is the data employees use to make decisions and take action. Improving employees' knowledge means a commitment to training and development. The training investments are essential in a high-involvement organization because when employees are making important workplace decisions, it is important that they have the skills and abilities to make the right decisions. New employees at General Motors' Saturn plant initially receive between 350 and 700 hours of initial training; Saturn sets an organization-wide goal that all employees receive at least 92 hours of additional training each year. On average, Saturn employees have received 148 hours of training each year since 1991. The reason Saturn relies so heavily on training is the fact that the work process design relies heavily on the use of employee skills and knowledge, "to build a small car competitively in the United States, either costs (wages) had to be lowered or organizational productivity raised to make up the difference...The only way to make up this difference would be to mobilize the knowledge, skills, and commitment of the workforce, and to design the work systems and organization in ways that achieved higher quality and productivity".

The **rewards** component of the high-involvement equation means rewarding employees for expending discretionary effort to enhance organizational performance. A key element in the high-involvement equation, rewards for performance ensure that employees use their power,

information and knowledge for the good of the firm. In each of the three cases mentioned in the previous discussion of power, information and knowledge, rewards were in place for employee contributions to the firm, and that link was critical to the success of the firm's high involvement work practices.

**Findings and Conclusion; This study with** all the support of evidences from the review of literature and other secondary sources of data and other support researchers suggestions submits the following suggestions; The high-involvement work practices are becoming a necessity and not a luxury if the industry wants to see success. Edward Lawler suggests that to implement high involvement management, “virtually every major feature of the organization needs to be designed differently.” Ledford and Mohrman developed the method of “self-design” in 1993. The self -design is effective because the movement to a high-involvement system requires an extremely high amount of learning among managers and front-line employees. By participating in the process of investigation and development of system changes, employees and managers gain the opportunity to both absorb the information needed to make the change and develop the knowledge and skills needed to change successfully. In self-design, changes are developed and implemented iteratively as business units identify an appropriate starting point for change, design and pilot the new system, and make adjustments. Over time, participants in the process re-design more and more systems and build their change management and system design skills. Ledford and Morhman argue that, “This strategy for change is appropriate in guiding large-scale change where all contingencies and relationships cannot be known in advance, and where organizations and their members are required to learn substantially new behavior patterns in order to support the desired change” to the high-involvement work system.

There can be numerous reasons why a participatory change process is better for high-involvement management, it is because beyond the knowledge, skills, and information employees gain through the participative process, participation generates engagement on all three levels by affecting beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors, participating in the change process changes people's beliefs about the change by giving them information about the limitations of the current work system and by exposing them to new ideas that raise awareness about alternative ways of conducting the work. Information about the limitations of the existing system and possibilities

inherent in other methods help employees understand the need for the change and the benefits of the new system. Participation also generates more positive attitudes toward the change to high involvement. When people participate in the design of the new system, they become personally invested in making the system succeed. Participation in the design process that produces the behaviors indicative of highly engaged employees.

When leaders put employees in the participating mode, employees begin to act in ways that go beyond their narrow job descriptions in order to contribute to organizational effectiveness. Employees begin to apply a wider range of ability, knowledge and expertise to organizational problems. Hence, employees gain experience in devoting more effort, knowledge and time to the organization. The self-design process normalizes these behaviors, generating a climate of high employee engagement with high-involvement work practices that provide employees with the power to make workplace decisions, training to build their knowledge and skills in order to make and implement decisions effectively, information about how their actions affect business unit performance, and rewards for their efforts to improve performance, can result in a win-win situation for employees and managers. Employees enjoy working in high involvement workplaces, and leaders reap enhanced performance from these systems. Designing and implementing a high-involvement system is not a trivial task, the four principles of power, knowledge, information and rewards can be generalized to both manufacturing and service environments, their application to any particular workplace requires fitting these principles to specific and somewhat unique situations.

Converting to a high-involvement work system requires that managers and employees work together to virtually remake the entire organization through the process of self-design, with small pilot projects almost anywhere in the organization, and handing responsibility for a piece of an interdependent system over to employees can naturally result in the cascading of employee involvement throughout the work flow process. Nevertheless high involvement is a rigorous, long-term process, the result can be a uniquely structured organization with highly engaged employees and a strategic advantage over competitors. The positive Spiral Effect on Employees for Involving Employees in Decision Making; Companies and departments who have a higher level of employee involvement in decision making show higher levels of employee motivation

and satisfaction. All managers and supervisors would like everyone to think that they involve employees in the decision making of their department or team.



**Figure; 9;** The positive Spiral Effect on Employees for Involving Employees in Decision Making;Source; Dr.C.Karthikeyan

The employees or Team members feel that **they are a valued part of the team**. When associates are involved in the decision making, they feel that people in ownership and management positions value them as a significant contributor to the team's success. When people feel valued, they will usually raise their level of effort and commitment to ensure the department's or company's success. **The associates are able to make better day-to-day decisions** because they have accurate information regarding the direction of the company or department. Managers and supervisors who do not share information or involve associates in the decision making are usually the same people who complain that associates are unable to make good decisions. **The associates feel a stronger bond of responsibility for making the decision**. When you are responsible for making a decision, and the decision turns out to be a bad one, you do whatever you can to correct the decision and make things right. The same is true for

everyone. When associates are involved in making the decision, the chances of the decision being a success increase since all members of the team are committed to correcting the parts of the decision that are not in alignment with the department's or company's vision and values. **The associates will focus more of their energy on future-oriented problem** solving rather than blaming their current problems on management. Associates who have not been involved in making the decision have co-authored some great comments such as, "It wasn't my decision," "Whose brilliant idea was this?" or "This will never work in a hundred years." All of these comments demonstrate two things: First, the employee is not in agreement with the decision and second, when the decision goes wrong, and it will because the associate is not committed to the decision's success, the employee has someone to blame. **Morale and motivation is higher** in organizations where associates are involved in the department/company's decision making. When people are involved in the decision making, they know they make a difference to the department's or company's success. When people know they make a difference, they find it easier to be motivated and satisfied with their job. **It frees up a manager's time** to contribute to the department's success in other areas. When associates are able to make the decisions that impact their work, it frees up the manager or supervisor to work on more future-oriented issues that will ultimately make the department or company even more successful. For example, a manager will now have the time to look at how the department's or company's customers are changing their demands and level of expectations. With this new knowledge, the manager can lead a discussion on what changes will have to occur in the next decade to meet the changing customer demands. In addition, managers will have more time for changing procedures and refining processes. Involving associates sounds easy. It is, but there are some basic philosophical challenges every manager or supervisor must overcome. These are some of the challenges: It takes more time up front to involve associates, it takes trust on behalf of the manager, It takes forgiveness on the part of the manager, and the Involvement is worth the risk. It results in associates who are dedicated, committed, and who produce greater results...both in quality and in profits...than a group of associates who are not involved. You will be satisfied with the long-term results. Every company's productivity and profitability is because of the employees working to achieve individual goals, which in turn, should be directly aligned to support broader company goals. The top-down alignment, communicated throughout the organization, increasing everyone's ability to cover more ground, faster, pursuing a path

together as a well-oiled machine or as individual parts flying off in multiple directions. This study recommends further research on the advancements with LIBERAL WORK PLACE policies to see any significant difference from the millennial workforce who have entered the industry recently.

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