
Engagement: The Continuing Story

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Executive Summary

Introduction

In 2004, IES published its first report on the subject of employee engagement, entitled 'Drivers of Employee Engagement'. Since then, engagement has passed through the 'fad' phase to become established as a perennial topic for debate on the HR and management agenda. Despite this level of interest and belief in the corporate world, there is still relatively little academic research about employee engagement. IES carried out its first phase of research with over 40 companies in the private and public sectors. We then tested our findings in the NHS.

Following publication of our first phase research (Robinson, Perryman and Hayday, *Drivers of Employee Engagement*, 2004), we moved on to our second phase which is reported here. This focused on firstly testing the indicators and diagnostic tool in different organisations and sectors, and secondly investigating the differences between engagement levels and drivers of key groups of employees.

Engagement analysis

Our engagement indicator gives a score from 1 (highly disengaged) to 5 (highly engaged), with 3 as the neutral midpoint. Headline results are:

- **Gender:** Women scored 3.57, men slightly higher at 3.60.
- **Ethnicity:** Overall, minority ethnic respondents returned slightly higher engagement scores than their white counterparts; 3.63 compared to 3.61.
- **Disability/limiting medical condition:** The level of engagement of those with a disability/medical condition was slightly higher overall, than it was for those without; 3.64 compared to 3.61.

- **Caring responsibilities:** Overall, those with adult caring responsibilities only had the lowest engagement levels, while those who were 'double carers' (adults and child) had the highest.
- There appears to be no clear pattern when engagement levels are compared by organisation. The top two scorers, however, do share one characteristic that differentiates them from the rest; they are relatively new organisations.
- Job role has an impact on engagement, in that managers have higher levels of organisational engagement than their colleagues in operational, professional or support roles. Those in operational support roles have higher engagement levels than their colleagues who provide support of a more 'back-room' nature. Professionals, overall, have the lowest organisational engagement levels of all groups.
- As a general rule, engagement levels tend to start high, then decline to a low point after some years of service, after which there is an increase associated with long service.
- There was almost no difference in overall engagement scores between full timers (3.58) and part timers (3.59). Work pattern appears to make a more marked impact, in that those working days scored 3.60, while those working other patterns (eg shifts, nights) scored a much lower 3.36.
- Having an appraisal or performance review within the past 12 months made a difference to engagement, with those who received an appraisal scoring higher than those who did not (3.62 compared to 3.52).
- Possession of a PDP made an even bigger difference to engagement levels than receiving an appraisal. Those with a PDP (40 per cent) scored 3.66 overall, while the 60 per cent who did not scored 3.46.
- In general, receiving training during the previous 12 months had a positive impact on engagement levels. Those who had received no training scored 3.46, rising to 3.57 for those who had received one or two days, 3.61 for those with three to five days, and 3.66 for those who had experienced six to ten days.
- There was a direct relationship between respondents' views of development opportunities and their engagement levels. Those who rated their opportunities as 'excellent' scored 4.15 while those who considered they were 'non-existent' scored 3.39.
- Having an accident during the previous 12 months was associated with lower levels of engagement overall (3.48, compared to 3.57 for those who had not had an accident).
- Being harassed at work has a denting effect on engagement levels, with violence having the biggest impact (scoring 3.29 compared to 3.59 for those who had not experienced any form of harassment). The source of harassment is also very

important; it seems that employees are much more able to withstand harassment from colleagues (3.36) or clients (3.38) than managers (3.08).

- There is a straightforward relationship between leaving/staying intentions and engagement, with those planning to stay for the foreseeable future scoring 3.71, compared to 3.29 for those planning to leave as soon as possible.
- When asked if their organisation was better, worse or the same compared to two years ago, those who felt their organisation was better scored 3.85 for engagement, compared to 3.51 for those who thought it was the same and 3.31 who thought it was worse.
- 41 per cent of senior managers, 18 per cent of support staff, and 14 per cent of professionals were 'highly engaged'.
- 44 per cent of respondents in organisation 1 were 'highly engaged' compared with only 14 per cent in organisation 9. Only four per cent of organisation 1's respondents were disengaged, but 22 per cent of organisation 9's respondents fell into this category.
- 40 per cent of those who thought their development opportunities were good or excellent were highly engaged. Only two per cent of those who thought their development opportunities were good or excellent were disengaged.
- Only three per cent of senior managers were disengaged, compared with 11 per cent of support staff and 14 per cent of professionals (meaning that the same percentage of professionals were disengaged as were highly engaged).
- 14 per cent of those who worked shifts/nights, but only nine per cent of those working days, were disengaged.
- 22 per cent of those who had experienced harassment were disengaged.

Engagement drivers

In order to arrive at the drivers of engagement, we constructed a regression model with engagement scores as the outcome measure.

Figure 1 gives a diagrammatic representation of the results of running the regression model. The items on the left of the diagram are all 'engagement drivers', in that they are the aspects that were shown to have a definite impact on engagement levels.

One important finding from our Phase 2 research relates to the most significant drivers of engagement. Our Phase 1 findings included the fact that the main driver of engagement in the NHS was found to be feeling valued and involved. The extent to which it was the main driver was so overwhelming that all other drivers, even if significant statistically, appeared relatively unimportant. Our Phase 2 findings show that, although feeling valued and involved is very important in driving engagement,

it is not the only key driver – in overall terms, it contributes approximately on a par with job satisfaction.

Figure 1: Engagement drivers



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

It should be noted that very many variables are associated with each other, even if they do not emerge from the regression analysis as engagement drivers. This is relevant when considering the impact of the immediate manager. If the relationship between the individual and his/her manager is so important, why does the 'management' indicator not emerge as an engagement driver? The answer appears to be that the immediate manager influences many aspects of working life, which in turn impact on engagement levels. Other aspects of working life contribute in a similar way to driving those aspects that are key engagement drivers.

One of the things we wanted to find out was whether or not engagement drivers are the same in every organisation and, if not, where the main differences lie. Our findings do seem to suggest that job satisfaction is important as a driver generally; that feeling valued and involved is very important in some, but not all, organisations; and that unusual drivers can occasionally emerge.

Conclusions

Our engagement indicator, which consists of 12 attitudinal statements (see Appendix 3), proved to work well in every participating organisation in Phase 2 of our research, and had a high level of statistical reliability overall.

Engagement, however, is not something that has a common, accepted definition. As in many other areas of people management, different definitions and different measures make benchmarking difficult. Organisations may have to choose between a standard measure that does not quite meet their requirements, but enables benchmarking, and

a customised measure that is ideal in every way except for the ability to compare with other organisations.

Our research has shown that, although it is possible to identify the key drivers of engagement within an organisation, there is considerable variability between and within organisations. Some things that employees perceive as very important – such as their relationship with their line manager, and their opportunities for training and career development – do not necessarily emerge as engagement drivers in their own right. This does not mean, however, that organisations can ignore them; they may not be direct drivers, but they are sub-drivers. The implication for organisations is that it really is important to understand your workforce, not only in overall terms but broken down into employee groups.

There is not always clarity about who, within the organisation, is primarily responsible for driving engagement. Senior managers, the line manager, and the HR function all have a part to play.

Although engagement is now starting to gain credence as an academic construct, there is still relatively little evidence in the public domain that high levels of engagement bring about better organisational performance. The lack of evidence has not prevented many organisations from investing considerable resources into the measurement and analysis of employee engagement, and the implementation of various initiatives designed to raise engagement levels. The belief that engagement does influence performance is clearly widely held.

There is no easy answer as far as engagement is concerned – no simple pulling of one or two levers to raise engagement levels. There is no real substitute for understanding the workforce in depth, which implies good quality line management, a professional HR function, and a senior management that is prepared to invest in firstly a thorough analysis of employee attitude survey data, and secondly acting upon the results.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

In 2004, IES published its first report on the subject of employee engagement, entitled 'Drivers of Employee Engagement'. Since then, engagement has passed through the 'fad' phase to become established as a perennial topic for debate on the HR and management agenda. Many organisations, especially the larger ones, measure levels of employee engagement on a regular basis. Some, recognising the link between individual motivation and good quality line management, even reward managers whose teams register high engagement scores.

Despite this level of interest and belief in the corporate world, there is still relatively little academic research about employee engagement; the measurement and analysis of engagement remains an activity that is carried out mainly by consultancy and survey providers, on behalf of organisations. There is evidence of a considerable degree of benchmarking, both internal and external, although the latter is hampered by the fact that there is no single agreed definition or measure of engagement.

IES carried out its first phase of research with over 40 companies in the private and public sectors. After defining engagement, we developed an engagement measure and a diagnostic tool to identify engagement drivers, then tested our findings in the NHS. Here, the biggest driver of engagement was found to be a sense of feeling valued by, and involved with, the organisation. A recap of our Phase 1 research findings is at Appendix 1. We then moved on to our second phase, reported here. This focused on firstly testing the indicators and diagnostic tool in different organisations and sectors, and secondly investigating the differences between engagement levels and drivers of key groups of employees.

1.2 Phase 2 research

For our second research phase, we carried out employee engagement surveys in 2005 in eight organisations. In some of these we surveyed the whole workforce, whereas in others we were given access to particular locations or groups of employees. Our

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achieved sample sizes (completed questionnaires) ranged from 33 to 461. In addition to these eight sets of survey data, we also used a sample of NHS responses obtained in 2003 during Phase 1 of our research, so our total sample size was 1,786. To preserve anonymity, we have not used the names of the participating organisations. These were:

1. The retail arm of a mobile telephone company, where we surveyed employees in three of the company's geographical retail areas (n = 111).
2. A government agency, where we surveyed all staff (n = 103).
3. A charity that carries out medical research, where we again surveyed all employees (n = 461).
4. A police force, in which a small group of staff working on a particular project were surveyed (n = 36).
5. A secondary school, where all staff (teaching and non-teaching) were surveyed (n = 33).
6. A regulatory body for a utility supplier, in which all employees were surveyed (n = 190).
7. The IT function of a county council (n = 117).
8. A business software company, where all employees who worked as consultants were surveyed (n = 354).
9. Our NHS sample from Phase 1 of our research (n = 381).

The questionnaire we used as the basis of our research is in Appendix 2, although it should be noted that some of the participating organisations asked for additional questions, while others took out some questions. Every participating organisation received a report of its own results, including an analysis of the level of engagement of its employees. In all but the smallest two participating organisations, we were also able to use our diagnostic tool to identify engagement drivers. In the larger participating organisations, we carried out further drivers analysis on sub-groups of employees.

As well as the organisation-level analyses, we analysed the whole data set to see if any engagement patterns were discernible in terms of firstly employees' personal and job characteristics, and secondly their experiences at work.

The results of our research are contained in this report. Chapter 2 describes our engagement indicator analysis in detail, while Chapter 3 gives the results of the application of our engagement drivers diagnostic tool. Finally, Chapter 4 draws together our conclusions and highlights the engagement issues that we feel to be particularly challenging and important.

2 Engagement Analysis

2.1 The engagement indicator

2.1.1 The full indicator

Our full engagement indicator is made up of 12 attitudinal statements. These were chosen to represent the key aspects of engagement identified in the first phase of our research:

- commitment to the organisation and identification with its values
- belief that the organisation enables the individual to perform well
- being a good organisational citizen, ie having a willingness to help others and be a good team player, to 'go the extra mile' and understand the wider context of the business.

These aspects of engagement, taken together, represent an attitude towards the organisation that is likely to result in positive behaviours, that will in turn make the organisation a better place. The 12 attitudinal statements comprising our engagement indicator are:

'I speak highly of this organisation to my friends.'

'I would be happy to recommend this organisation's products/services to my friends and family.'

'This organisation is known as a good employer.'

'This organisation has a good reputation generally.'

'I am proud to tell others I am part of this organisation.'

'This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.'

'I find that my values and the organisation's are very similar.'

'I always do more than is actually required.'

'I try to help others in this organisation whenever I can.'

'I try to keep abreast of current developments in my area.'

'I volunteer to do things outside my job that contribute to the organisation's objectives.'

'I frequently make suggestions to improve the work of my team/department/service.'

2.1.2 The shorter indicator

In many employee opinion surveys, space is at a premium. Competing issues jostle for attention, yet the longer the questionnaire, the less likely employees are to want to fill it in. Organisations wishing to measure engagement, but being unable to afford the luxury of including 12 statements, could consider statements based on the following sub-set:

I speak highly of this organisation to my friends (implies a positive attitude and a pride in the organisation)

I would be happy to recommend this organisation's products/services to my friends and family (suggests belief in the organisation and its products/services)

This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance (indicates that the individual feels enabled to do well, because the organisation is fulfilling its responsibilities in the two-way engagement relationship)

I try to help others in this organisation whenever I can (shows a willingness to behave altruistically and be a good team-player)

I volunteer to do things outside my job that contribute to the organisation's objectives (illustrates the employee's understanding of the bigger picture and willingness to 'go the extra mile').

Both the full and the sub-set were shown in our Phase 1 research to be robust statistically, although the full set (unsurprisingly) is more robust than the cut-down version.

2.2 The impact of personal and job characteristics

2.2.1 Gender

There were slightly more women (54 per cent) than men (46 per cent) in our sample. Women scored 3.57, men a slightly higher 3.60. There were some differences when the scores were examined by organisation; in organisations 5 and 7, for example, women registered higher scores than their male colleagues, while in organisation 2 the scores of men and women were identical.

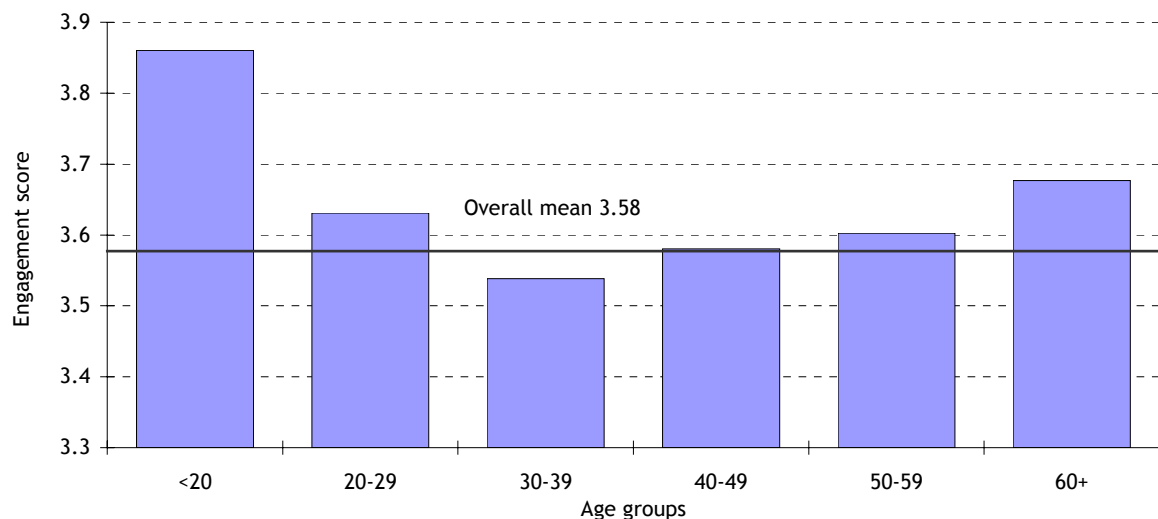
2.2.2 Age

The age of our respondents ranged from 17 to 69, with an average (mean) of 38.8 years. The distribution was:

- under 20: two per cent
- 20 to 29: 21 per cent
- 30 to 39: 32 per cent
- 40 to 49: 27 per cent
- 50 to 59: 16 per cent
- 60 and over: two per cent.

The average age of respondents varied by organisation, with organisation 1 standing out as markedly different from the rest. Here, the average age was only 25.1 years, compared to 38.7 years for organisation 4, 39.7 years for organisation 2, 40.0 years for organisation 7, 40.1 years for organisation 8, 40.6 years for organisation 9 and 44.9 years for organisation 5 (respondents in organisations 3 and 6 were not asked to give their age). Almost all the respondents in our sample aged under 20 were from organisation 1.

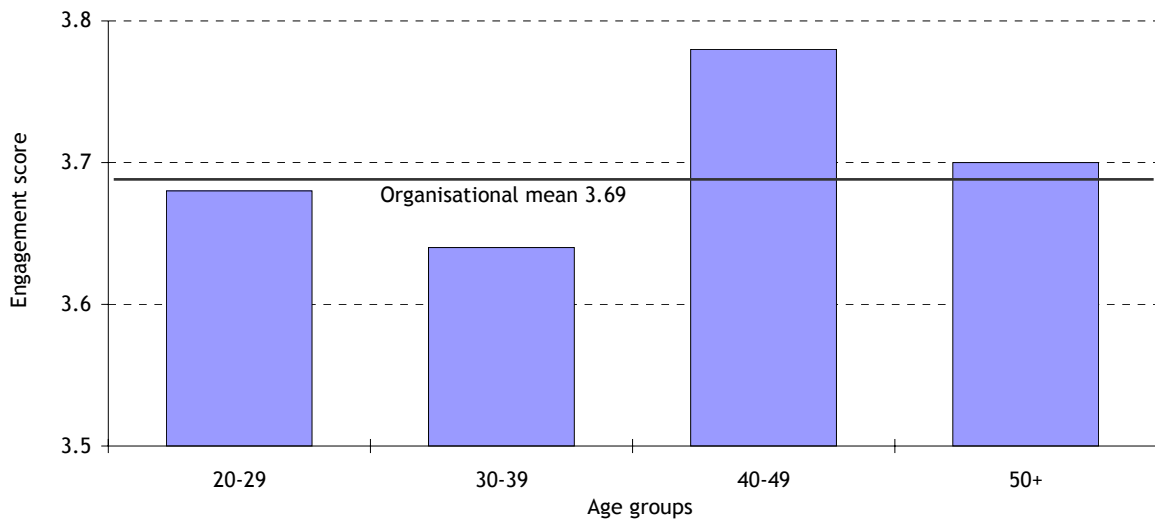
Figure 2.1: Engagement and age, mean



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

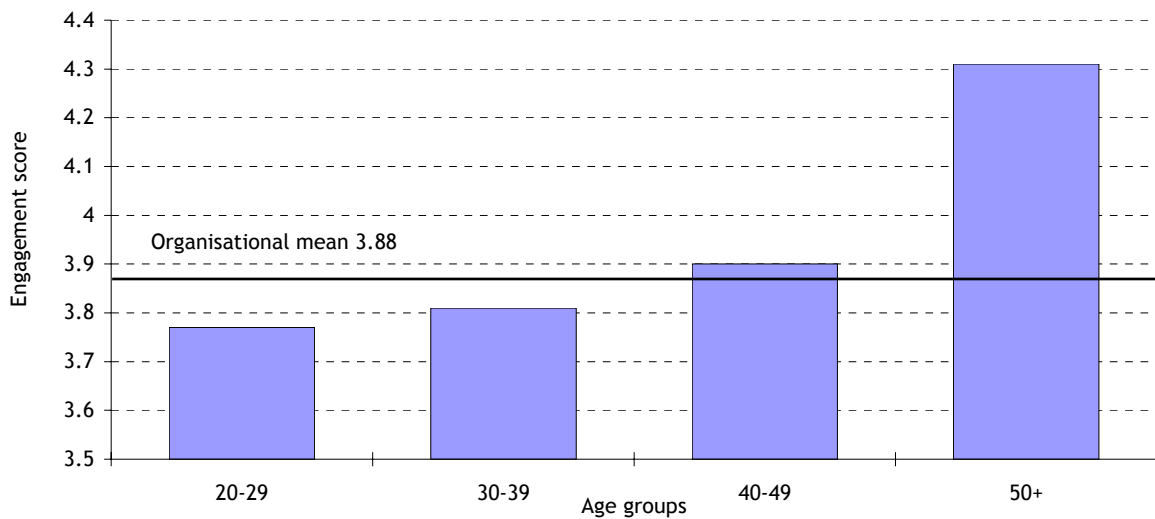
Age has an impact on engagement levels, as Figure 2.1 shows. This graph confirms our finding from the first phase of our research – that the most engaged employees tend to be those in the youngest and oldest age groups. However, analysis by organisation introduces a note of caution, as it indicates that the picture is not necessarily always this straightforward. Some organisations show no clear pattern (see, for example, Figure 2.1.1 for organisation 3), while others even buck the trend (see Figure 2.1.2 for organisation 2).

Figure 2.1.1: Engagement and age, mean - organisation 3



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

Figure 2.1.2: Engagement and age, mean - organisation 2



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

2.2.3 Ethnicity

Fourteen per cent of our sample were from a minority ethnic group. The overall picture was similar to our Phase 1 findings, in that minority ethnic respondents returned slightly higher engagement scores than their white counterparts (3.63 compared to 3.61). In organisations 1 and 2, however, white respondents had higher engagement levels than their white colleagues, while in organisation 3 the scores were identical.

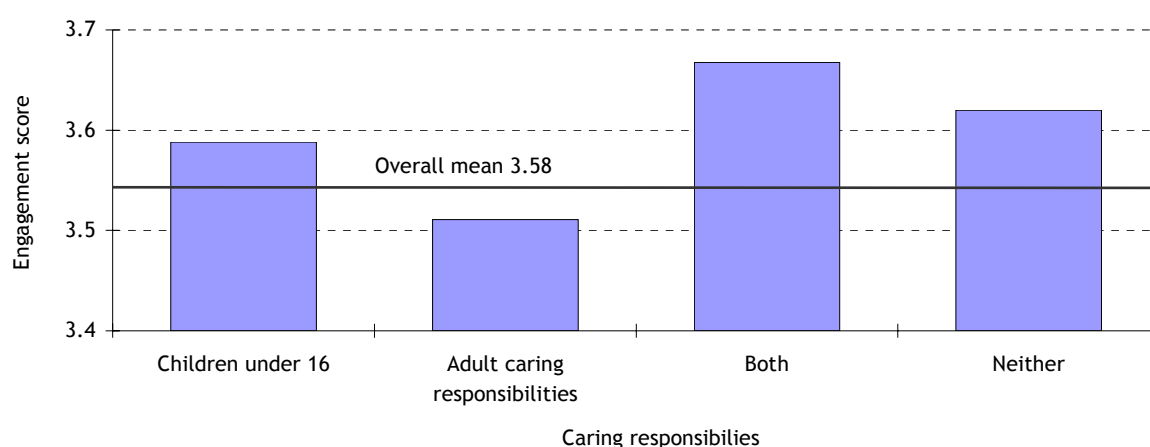
2.2.4 Disability

Four per cent of our sample said that they had a disability or medical condition that required support in the workplace. Their level of engagement with their organisation was higher overall, than it was for those without a disability/medical condition; 3.64 compared to 3.61. This was not the case in organisation 9, however, where those without a disability or medical condition scored higher (3.39 compared to 3.31).

2.2.5 Caring responsibilities

Thirty-nine per cent of respondents had caring responsibilities, for either children under 16 only (28 per cent), or an adult relative, friend or neighbour only (seven per cent) or both (four per cent). Figure 2.2 shows that, overall, those with adult caring responsibilities only had the lowest engagement levels, while those who were 'double carers' had the highest. However, the results were not consistent when examined by organisation. In organisation 9, for example, those without caring responsibilities had the highest engagement scores and those caring for both children and an adult the lowest.

Figure 2.2: Engagement and dependants, mean

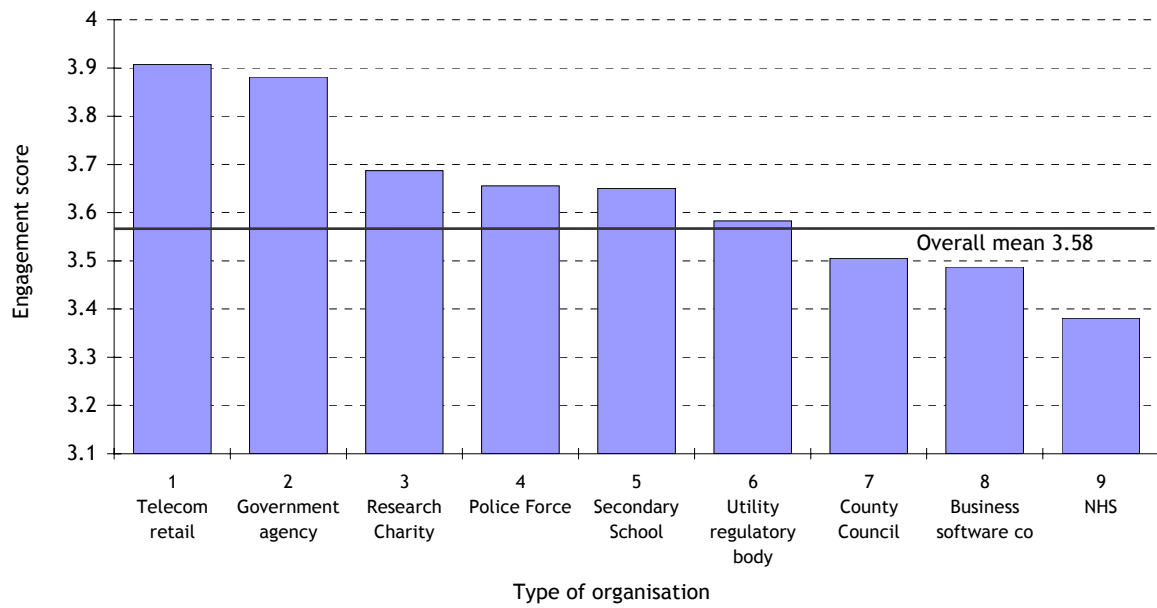


Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

2.2.6 The organisation

Figure 2.3 shows that the organisations in our sample all returned positive engagement scores (ie above the midpoint of three). However, they ranged from 3.38 to 3.91. There appears to be no clear pattern in these organisation-level results. The top scorer (organisation 1) is from the private sector, but so is the next-to-bottom scorer (organisation 8). The top and bottom scorers are large organisations, while the organisations in second and sixth place are both fairly small. The top two scorers, however, do share one characteristic that differentiates them from the rest; they are newer organisations, having both (coincidentally) been formed in 2001. It is possible that belonging to a new organisation – one that is developing and growing, and is perhaps still finding its way – encourages a sense of identification, optimism and engagement.

Figure 2.3: Engagement and organisation, mean



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

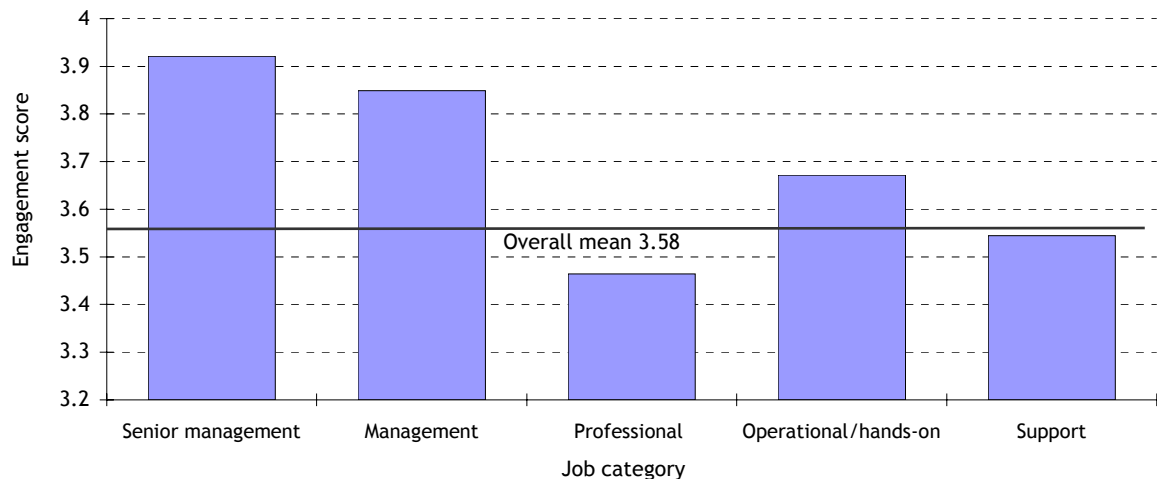
2.2.7 Job roles

We were able to allocate every respondent to the survey to a job role, as follows:

- senior management: six per cent
- management: seven per cent
- professional (eg teachers, nurses, business consultants): 47 per cent
- operational/hands-on (eg stores assistants, health care assistants): 23 per cent
- support (eg clerical, secretarial): 17 per cent.

Figure 2.4 shows that job role does have an impact of engagement.

Figure 2.4: Engagement and role, mean



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

- Managers have higher levels of organisational engagement than their colleagues in operational, professional or support roles.
- Those in operational roles (who are often supporting professionals, but who, unlike support staff, have frequent client contact) have higher engagement levels than their colleagues who provide support of a more 'back-room' nature.
- Professionals have the lowest organisational engagement levels of all groups.

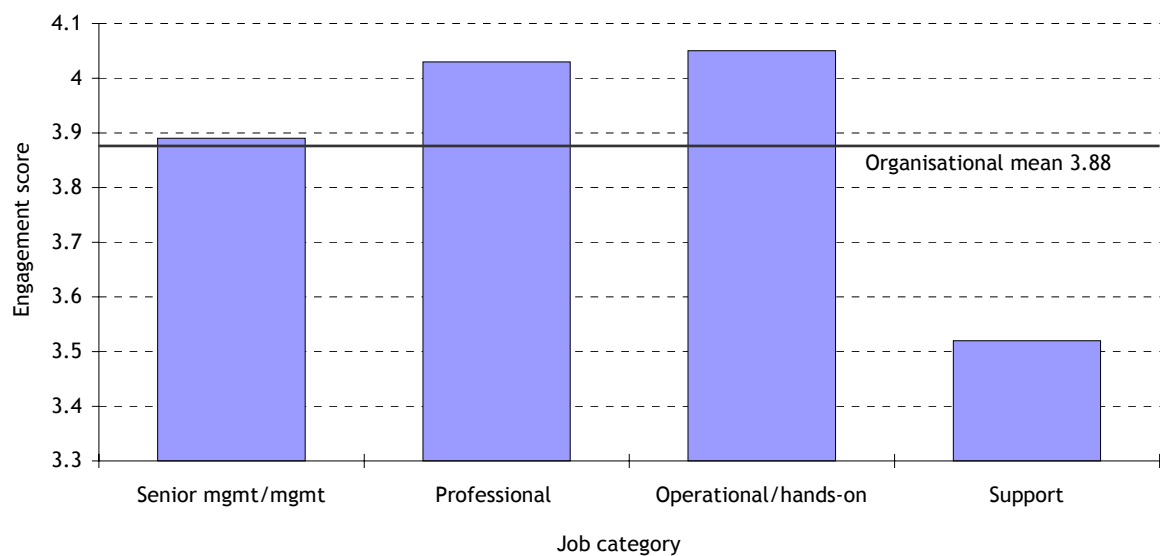
As with many other generalisations about engagement, however, a word of caution is needed; although this was a fairly consistent pattern, in some of the organisations in our sample the picture was less clear. In organisation 7, for example, professionals had the highest engagement levels of all groups (see Figure 2.4.1), while in organisation 2 professionals and operational support staff had higher engagement levels than managers (see Figure 2.4.2).

Figure 2.4.1: Engagement and role, mean - organisation 7



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

Figure 2.4.2: Engagement and role, mean - organisation 2

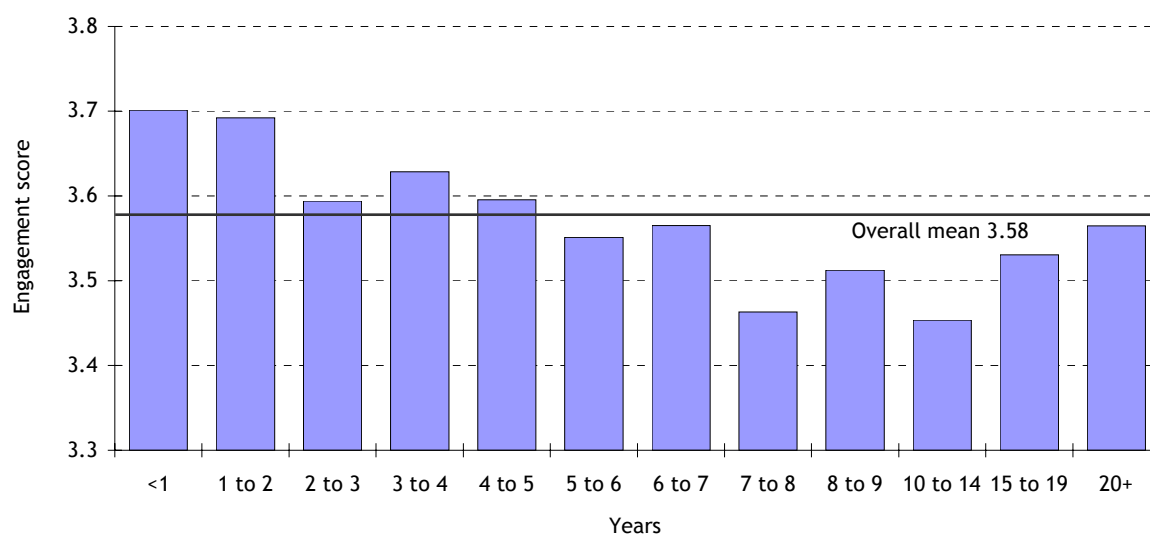


Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

2.2.8 Length of service

As a general rule, engagement levels tend to start high, then decline to a low point after some years of service, after which there is an increase associated with long service. Figure 2.5 illustrates this overall trend. However, as with many other aspects of engagement, this finding is not always consistent when examined by organisation. There can be unexpected peaks and troughs, while both the low point and the long service 'kick up' vary in terms of when, and even if, they occur.

Figure 2.5: Engagement and length of service, mean



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

2.2.9 Work hours and work pattern

Within the sample, 85 per cent worked full-time and 15 per cent part-time. The difference in overall engagement scores between full timers (3.58) and part timers (3.59) was not significant. An organisational analysis, however, shows that being full time or part time does seem to have an impact on engagement levels, albeit not consistently. In organisations 7 and 8, it makes no difference; however, in organisations 3 and 5, full timers are notably more engaged than part timers, while in organisation 2 it is part timers who are much more highly engaged than full timers.

Work pattern appears to make a more marked impact overall. Within the sample, 92 per cent worked a 'normal' daytime pattern. The remaining eight per cent worked a different pattern, for example shifts or nights. Those working days scored 3.60, while those working other patterns a much lower 3.36. Again, this finding is not consistent by organisation. In the three organisations in which there was a mix of working patterns, respondents in two of them (organisations 7 and 9) returned higher engagement scores if working a normal day, whereas in the third (organisation 4), the reverse was true. A tentative conclusion might be that employees who work the usual, more accepted pattern within an organisation tend to have higher engagement levels; in organisations 7 and 9, those who did not work days were in the minority, whereas in organisation 4, shift working was the norm.

2.3 The impact of experiences at work

2.3.1 Receiving an appraisal

Having an appraisal or performance review within the past 12 months made a difference to engagement, with those who received an appraisal scoring higher than those who did not (3.62 compared to 3.52). In organisations 2, 5, 7 and 9 a similar pattern was found, with those who had received an appraisal scoring notably higher than those who had not. However, in organisations 1, 3, 4 and 8, there was no or very little difference; in organisation 8, those who had received an appraisal actually scored lower than those who had not, although the difference was slight.

2.3.2 Having a performance development plan (PDP)

Possession of a PDP made an even bigger difference to engagement levels than receiving an appraisal. Those with a PDP (40 per cent) scored 3.66 overall, while the 60 per cent who did not scored 3.46. With one exception this finding was consistent across our sample, with respondents in organisations 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 9 all returning notably higher scores (the difference ranged from 0.11 to 0.31) if they had a PDP. Organisation 5 was the exception; here, respondents with a PDP had slightly lower engagement scores than those who did not, although the difference was not significant.

2.3.3 Receiving training

In general, receiving training during the previous 12 months had a positive impact on engagement levels. Those who had received no training scored 3.46, rising to 3.57 for those who had received one or two days, 3.61 for those with three to five days, and 3.66 for those who had experienced six to ten days. Interestingly, those with over ten days training then show a drop in engagement scores (to 3.60). Possibly this is because very high levels of training might indicate, for at least some respondents, a problem with performance that need to be tackled.

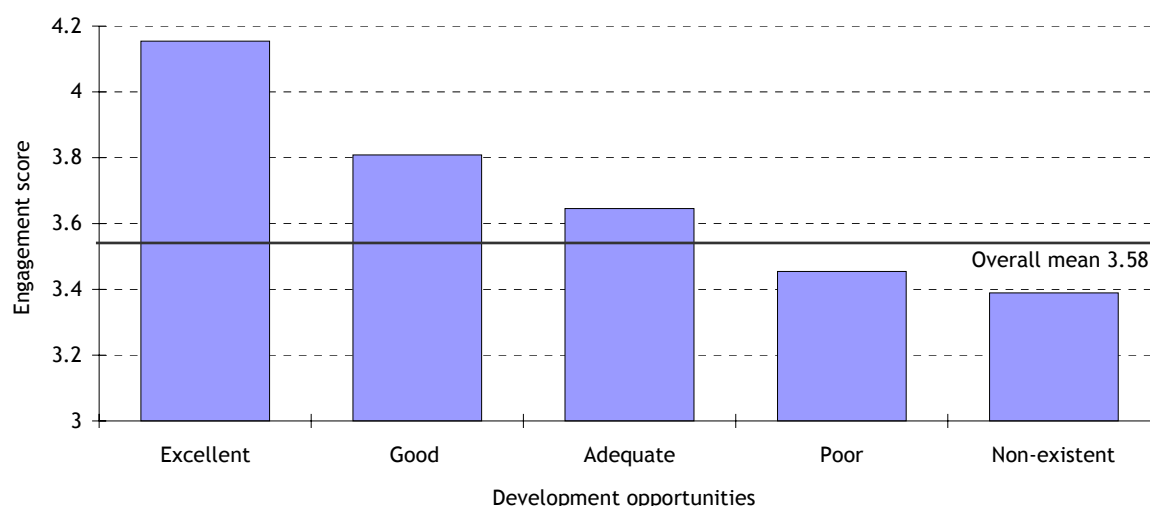
An analysis by organisation shows the usual inconsistencies. Although in organisations 1, 2, 5 and 9, no or very little training was associated with lower engagement levels, and high levels of training with higher engagement, this was not the case for organisations 3 and 7. In both the latter organisations, those who had received no days training returned engagement scores that were higher than average for the organisation concerned.

2.3.4 Experience of less formal development opportunities

One of the questions to which survey participants responded asked for opinions of less formal development opportunities, such as secondments, coaching, multi-

disciplinary working and special projects. Responses were on a five-point scale ranging from 'excellent' to 'non-existent'. Figure 2.6 shows that there is a direct relationship between respondents' views of development opportunities and their engagement levels. The question about development opportunities was asked in seven out of the nine participating organisations (all except 4 and 6), and every one showed the same consistent pattern of engagement levels declining as satisfaction with development opportunities decreases.

Figure 2.6: Engagement and development opportunities, mean



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

2.3.5 Having an accident at work

Having an accident during the previous 12 months, which had happened to 12 per cent of respondents in our sample, was associated with lower levels of engagement overall (3.48, compared to 3.57 for those who had not had an accident). Only five of the organisations in the sample asked the question about accidents. Of these, having an accident was associated with notably lower engagement levels in organisations 5 and 9, but somewhat higher levels in organisations 1, 2 and 7. It is possible that engagement levels are influenced less by the accident itself, and more by the speed and effectiveness of any response to an accident, and any subsequent action taken by the organisation.

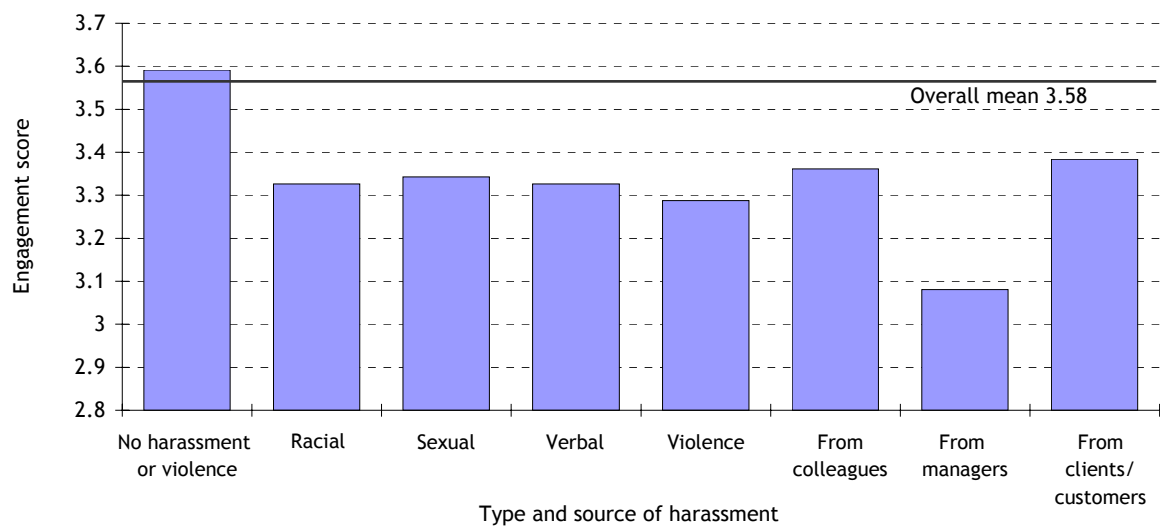
2.3.6 Being harassed at work

In five participating organisations (1, 2, 5, 7 and 9), questions were asked about harassment. These covered whether or not the respondent had experienced harassment at work within the last 12 months; the type of harassment experienced (verbal, racial, sexual or violence); and the source of harassment (colleague, manager or client). Figure 2.7 summarises the results. It appears that being harassed at work has a denting effect on engagement levels, with violence having the biggest impact.

The source of harassment is also very important; it seems that employees are much more able to withstand harassment from colleagues or client than managers.

When analysed by organisation, in four out of the five organisations, being harassed was associated with lower levels of engagement, although in organisation 1 the differences were slight. Organisation 2 showed an inconsistent pattern with those who had experienced harassment returning higher engagement scores; however, the number of people experiencing any form of harassment in that organisation was low.

Figure 2.7: Engagement and harassment, mean



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

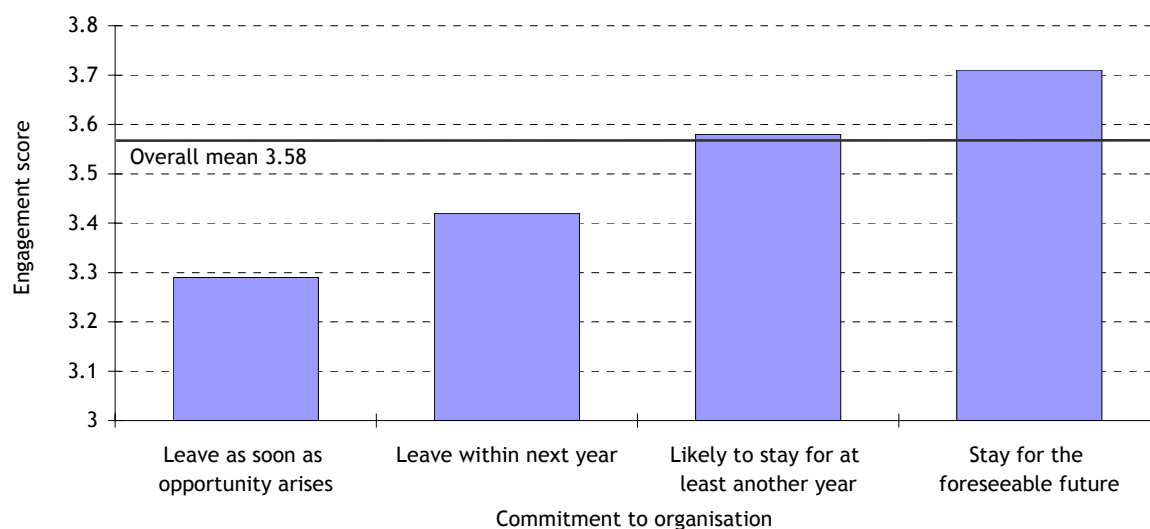
2.4 Overall views of the organisation and engagement

2.4.1 Leaving/staying intentions

To gauge current staying/leaving intentions, respondents were asked if they intended to leave as soon as the opportunity arises, leave within the next year, stay for at least another year, or stay for the foreseeable future.

Figure 2.8 gives the overall results, and shows that there is a straightforward relationship between leaving/staying intentions and engagement. This finding is consistent among all seven of the participating organisations that included this question in their survey, with one small exception. In organisation 5, those who aimed to leave as soon as the opportunity arises had the lowest engagement levels, but those who planned to stay for the foreseeable future had similar engagement levels to those who planned to leave within the next year, and lower levels than those who were likely to stay for at least another year.

Figure 2.8: Engagement and staying/leaving intentions, mean



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

2.4.2 A better place to work?

One of the questions within the questionnaire was aimed at those who had been with their organisation for at least two years; those who had not were filtered out of the analysis. The question asked whether employees felt that their organisation was a better place to work, the same, or a worse place to work, compared to two years ago. Six of the participating organisations asked this question. In two (organisations 1 and 2), respondents felt it was clearly better, with more respondents selecting 'better' than either 'the same' or 'worse'. In organisation 5, respondents felt it was better on balance, in that 'the same' was the most frequently selected category, followed by 'better'. In organisations 7 and 9, the overall view was that it was worse on balance, in that 'the same' was selected most frequently, followed by 'worse'. Finally, organisation 8's respondents were the most pessimistic, in that the majority (57 per cent) selected 'worse', with only 13 per cent choosing 'better'.

There is a direct relationship between responses to this question and engagement levels, in that those who felt their organisation was better scored 3.85, compared to 3.51 for those who thought it was the same and 3.31 who thought it was worse. This pattern is consistent among all six of the organisations that asked this question on their survey.

2.5 Engaged versus disengaged

In order to find out whether certain employee groups were more or less likely to be engaged with their organisations, we created two groups of people at either end of the engagement spectrum. These two groups were firstly the 'highly engaged' (whose engagement score was 4 or higher, *ie* at the upper end of the five-point scale) and secondly the 'disengaged' (whose engagement score was less than the midpoint of 3).

The characteristics of 'highly engaged' people were:

- average (mean) age 38.3
- average (mean) length of service 5.9 years
- 41 per cent of senior managers, 18 per cent of support staff, and 14 per cent of professionals were 'highly engaged'
- 14 per cent of those who worked shifts were highly engaged, compared with 21 per cent of those who worked days
- 40 per cent of those who thought their development opportunities were good or excellent were highly engaged
- 16 per cent of those who had experienced harassment were in this group.

By comparison, the characteristics of 'disengaged' people were:

- average (mean) age of 39.7, *ie* a little higher than the 'highly engaged' group
- length of service 8.4 years, again higher than the 'highly engaged'
- only three per cent of senior managers were disengaged, compared with 11 per cent of support staff and 14 per cent of professionals (meaning that the same percentage of professionals were disengaged as were highly engaged)
- 14 per cent of those who worked shifts, but only nine per cent of those working days, were disengaged
- only two per cent of those who thought their development opportunities were good or excellent were disengaged
- 22 per cent of those who had experienced harassment were disengaged.
- it was also apparent that some organisations have notably higher percentages of 'highly engaged' and 'disengaged' employees than others:
 - 44 per cent of organisation 1 were 'highly engaged' compared with 14 per cent of organisation 9
 - only four per cent of organisation 1's respondents were disengaged, but 22 per cent of organisation 9's respondents fell into this category.

3 Engagement Diagnostics

3.1 The IES diagnostic tool

In order to arrive at the drivers of engagement, we constructed a regression model with engagement scores as the outcome measure. The inputs to the model are listed below. Some aspects were omitted from the model, notably having an accident, experiencing harassment, and views about the organisation as a place to work compared with two years ago. This was because including these aspects would have considerably reduced the sample size on which the model was based. Some organisations did not include questions about accidents or harassment within their questionnaires, and those that did found that relatively few people had experienced an accident or harassment. The question about the organisation as a place to work compared with two years ago applied only to those who had been with the organisation for at least two years, thus cutting out all respondents with shorter lengths of service.

The inputs to the model are listed below.

- Personal and job characteristics:
 - gender
 - age
 - length of service
 - ethnicity
 - responsibility for dependants (children)
 - responsibility for dependants (adult)
 - disability/limiting medical condition.

- Experiences at work:
 - receiving an appraisal within past 12 months
 - having a PDP
 - formal training over past 12 months
 - access to less formal development opportunities.
- Attitudes to aspects of working life:
 - communication
 - pay and benefits
 - performance and appraisal
 - feeling valued and involved
 - training and development
 - job satisfaction
 - management
 - co-operation
 - colleagues
 - stress and work pressure
 - health and safety
 - equal opportunities.

3.2 Overall findings

Figure 3.1 gives a diagrammatic representation of the results of running the regression model. The items on the left of the diagram are all 'engagement drivers', in that they are the aspects that were shown to have a definite impact on engagement levels. The top six aspects are clearly significant statistically, while the bottom two contribute towards driving engagement in that they are very likely to have been significant with a larger sample size. In the diagram, the more important the driver, the thicker the arrow. Very broadly, job satisfaction and feeling valued and involved are twice as important as equal opportunities and health and safety in driving engagement, three times as important as length of service and ethnicity, and four times as important as communication and co-operation.

Figure 3.1: Engagement drivers

Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

When all the inputs to the model (that is, all the items described in Section 3.1 above) are added together, they explain 53 per cent of the variance within the model. This means that 53 per cent of the differences in engagement scores between one organisation and another, or one staff group and another, or one individual and another, can be explained by the inputs to the model – which means that a further 47 per cent of variance is due to other factors. ‘Other factors’ could be all sorts of things which could predispose an individual to answer questions in particular way. These could be factors such as national or organisational culture, an individual’s personality type, or simply the individual’s mood on the day he/she completed the questionnaire.

Of the 53 per cent of variance, 16 per cent is explained by personal characteristics and experiences at work (with the most important being ethnicity, access to development opportunities, length of service and gender), leaving 37 per cent that is explained by differences in attitudes towards aspects of working life.

One important finding from our Phase 2 research relates to the most significant drivers of engagement. Our Phase 1 findings (see Appendix 1) included the fact that the main driver of engagement in the NHS was found to be feeling valued and involved. The extent to which it was the main driver was so overwhelming that all other drivers, even if significant statistically, appeared relatively unimportant. The focus of our Phase 1 research therefore shifted to finding out what contributed towards this feeling of being valued by, and involved with, the organisation. Our Phase 2 findings show that, although feeling valued and involved is very important in driving engagement, it is not the only key driver – in overall terms, it contributes approximately on a par with job satisfaction.

3.3 But what about ...?

At first sight it may appear strange that some of the engagement differences, described in Chapter 2 as having a relationship with engagement levels, do not emerge from the diagnostic process as engagement drivers.

One very straightforward reason is that not all variables could be included within the regression calculation. Experiencing harassment, for example, appears to have a big impact on engagement levels (see Section 2.3.6), but the questions about harassment were included in only five participating organisations' questionnaires. It is possible that, with a bigger sample and higher buy-in among participating organisations, that experiencing harassment would have emerged as an engagement driver (driving it downwards).

Another reason is that many of the variables within the model are likely to influence the eventual outcome without emerging as a direct driver. To find out about engagement relationships – rather than engagement drivers – we carried out some simple correlations between different variables. Correlations show that two variables are associated, but does not demonstrate causation. The results of the correlation analysis are shown in a correlation matrix (Figure 3.2), which shows that very many variables are associated with each other, even if they do not emerge from the regression analysis as engagement drivers. In the matrix, two asterisks mean that the correlation is highly significant while one asterisk indicates that it is significant. Where no asterisk exists in a box, no significant association exists. Brackets around asterisks mean that the association is significant, but is going in opposite directions; for example, high engagement scores are associated with low stress and work pressure scores. In most cases, the association goes in a similar direction; for example, high engagement scores are associated with high scores for communication, pay and benefits, colleagues etc. A disadvantage of correlation, however, is that it is not possible to use variables with only two alternatives (such as gender, or whether or not disabled). However, these variables can be included within a regression model, and wherever possible we did so.

The theme of certain variables influencing engagement levels, while not emerging as a direct driver, is relevant when considering the impact of the immediate manager. If the relationship between the individual and his/her manager is as important as most commentators (including IES) say, why does the 'management' indicator not emerge as an engagement driver? The answer appears to be that the immediate manager influences many aspects of working life, leading ultimately to higher or lower engagement levels. An individual with a poor line manager is unlikely to feel positive about those aspects of working life that have been identified as key drivers – job satisfaction and feeling valued and involved. He or she may also not feel positive about equality of opportunity or health and safety, as it is often the manager's day to day behaviour that shapes employees' views about these aspects.

Figure 3.2: Correlation matrix

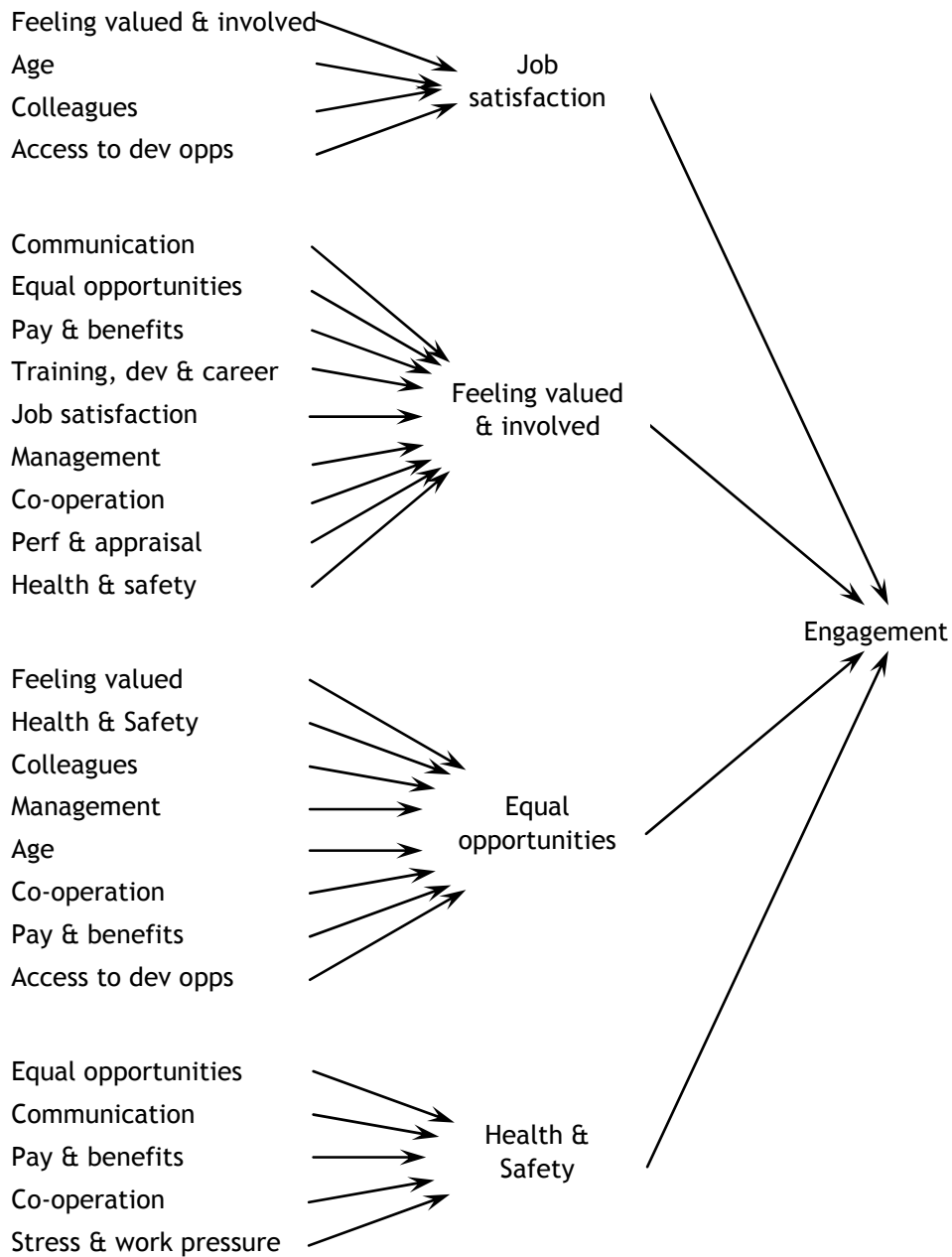
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1		**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	(**)	**	**		(**)	*	**
2	**		**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	(**)	**	**	(*)	(*)		**
3	**	**		**	**	**	**	**	**	**	(**)	**	**			**	**
4	**	**	**		**	**	**	**	**	**	(**)	**	**		(**)		**
5	**	**	**	**		**	**	**	**	**	(**)	**	**			**	**
6	**	**	**	**	**		**	**	**	**		**	**	**		**	**
7	**	**	**	**	**	**		**	**	**	(**)	**	**				**
8	**	**	**	**	**	**	**		**	**	(**)	**	**			**	**
9	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**		**	(**)	**	**		(**)		**
10	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**		(**)	**	**				**
11	(**)	(**)	(**)	(**)	(**)		(**)	(**)	(**)	(**)		(**)	(**)	*	**		(**)
12	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	(**)		**		(*)	*	**
13	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	(**)	**				*	**
14		(*)				**					*				**		
15	(**)	(*)		(**)					**		**	*		**			
16	*		**		**	**		**				*	*				**
17	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	(**)	**	**			**	

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Employee engagement | 10. Colleagues |
| 2. Pay & benefits | 11. Stress & work pressure |
| 3. Performance & appraisal | 12. Health & safety |
| 4. Feeling valued & involved | 13. Equal opportunities |
| 5. Training, development & career | 14. Age |
| 6. Job satisfaction | 15. Length of service |
| 7. Communication | 16. Training days |
| 8. Management | 17. Access to development opportunities |
| 9. Co-operation | |

Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

In summary, the regression model identifies engagement drivers, but this does not mean that aspects of working life that do not emerge as drivers are unimportant in the debate about employee engagement. In order to illustrate this, we set up some ‘lower level’ regression models, to explore what drives the four strongest drivers of employee engagement – job satisfaction, feeling valued and involved, equality of opportunity and health and safety. The results can be seen in Figure 3.3, which demonstrates that many aspects of working life contribute towards engagement by driving those aspects that are key engagement drivers. Views about management, communication, co-operation, colleagues, pay and benefits, and training, development and career all contribute in this way, as does one personal attribute – age.

Figure 3.3: Key engagement drivers with their ‘sub-drivers’



Source: IES Engagement Survey, 2005

3.4 Organisational differences

One of the things we wanted to find out was whether or not engagement drivers were the same in every organisation and, if not, where the main differences lay. It was soon apparent that the Phase 1 finding in the NHS, where the overwhelming driver was feeling valued and involved, did not appear to hold true in the Phase 2 participating organisations. We were able to carry out a drivers analysis in some of the Phase 2 organisations, where size and data permitted, with the following results.

- **Organisation 1:** key drivers were job satisfaction; training, development and career; and health and safety.
- **Organisation 3:** key drivers were communication and job satisfaction.
- **Organisation 7:** key drivers were feeling valued and involved, and job satisfaction.
- **Organisation 8:** key drivers were feeling valued and involved, co-operation and job satisfaction.

Although this sample of organisations is small, our findings do seem to suggest that job satisfaction is important as a driver generally; that feeling valued and involved is very important in some, but not all, organisations; and that unusual drivers can occasionally emerge, presumably due to culture or circumstances in a particular organisation (for example, communication in organisation 3).

3.5 Differences between employee groups

Another aspect of engagement that we wanted to explore was that of differences between employee groups. Firstly, we ran the regression model for each of the job categories we had created – managers, professional, operational hands-on, and support. The key drivers emerging for each groups were:

- **Managers:** job satisfaction; training, development and career; health and safety; pay and benefits; and length of service. The latter two were both negative drivers, in that lower lengths of service, and lower satisfaction with pay and benefits, were associated with higher engagement levels. This relationship between satisfaction with pay and benefits and engagement is counter-intuitive, and did not apply to all employee groups.
- **Professionals:** feeling valued and involved; job satisfaction; equal opportunities; pay and benefits; and ethnicity. Again, pay and benefits was counter-intuitively a negative driver.
- **Operational/hands-on:** feeling valued and involved; health and safety; and training days in the past year. The number of training days was a negative driver, a possible explanation for which is that poorly-performing employees are sometimes given a considerable amount of remedial training.
- **Support:** job satisfaction and equal opportunities.

Within organisations, employee groups often emerged with different engagement drivers. In organisation 1, for example, we ran the regression model for each of the three retail areas separately, and for managers and sales advisors separately. Different drivers emerged – in some cases, markedly different. It is interesting to note that feeling valued and involved, which is such an important driver in many organisations, did not appear as a driver in this company.

- **Area x:** communication; job satisfaction; and health and safety.
- **Area y:** job satisfaction; and training, development and career.
- **Area z:** job satisfaction; colleagues; and communication.
- **Managers:** training, development and career; job satisfaction; and co-operation.
- **Sales advisers:** job satisfaction; stress and work pressure; and management.

4 Engagement Conclusions and Challenges

4.1 The verdict on measuring engagement

Our Phase 1 research demonstrated that it was possible to devise a multi-statement indicator that represented the different facets of engagement. However, the first phase of our research took place in the NHS, so it was important to test whether the indicator could transfer to other settings and sectors. The 12-statement indicator proved to work well in every participating organisation in Phase 2 of our research, and had a high level of statistical reliability overall (see Appendix 3).

Engagement however, is not something that has a common, accepted definition. It is a concept which people seem to understand intuitively, but our Phase 1 research indicated that this understanding is not always easy to articulate and is also not necessarily consistent. As in many other areas of people management, different definitions and different measures make benchmarking difficult. Organisations may have to choose between a standard measure that does not quite meet their requirements, but enables benchmarking, and a customised measure that is ideal in every way except for the ability to compare with other organisations.

4.2 The relative importance of engagement drivers

Our research has shown that, although it is possible to identify the key drivers of engagement within an organisation, there is considerable variability between and within organisations. The participating organisations in our research had different drivers (although there were some overlaps), and also demonstrated that the key drivers for the organisation overall were not necessarily the key drivers for every function, location, business unit, grade or job group.

A further complication is the interplay between different aspects of working life. As shown in the previous chapter, some things that employees perceive as very important – such as their relationship with their line manager, and their opportunities for training and career development – did not necessarily emerge as engagement drivers in their own right. This does not mean, however, that organisations can ignore

them, as they appear to exert a strong influence on those aspects of working life that *do* drive engagement; they may not be direct drivers, but they are sub-drivers. Figure 3.3, in the previous chapter, shows that virtually everything that can be measured via the attitude survey has an impact on engagement levels. Also important (see Chapter 2) are experiences at work – both undesirable things, such as being harassed or having an accident, and more positive experiences, such as having a performance review or owning a performance development plan.

The implication for organisations is that it really is important to understand your workforce, not only in overall terms but broken down into employee groups. Age, ethnicity, gender, length of service, job role, location, and function could all make a difference in terms of engagement levels and engagement drivers.

4.3 Whose responsibility?

Although many organisations have embraced the concept of employee engagement and are measuring engagement levels assiduously, there is not always clarity about who, within the organisation, is primarily responsible for driving engagement.

- Senior managers clearly have a part to play. Their role as organisational leaders means that employees look to them to decide upon the most effective organisational strategy, to communicate this clearly and to involve employees in decision-making. They are also expected to lead by example. The importance of feeling valued and involved as an engagement indicator suggests that senior managers also need to be visible and to show appreciation for employees' efforts. Major decisions about organisation-wide aspects of working life – such as pay and reward – also fall within the remit of senior managers.
- To many employees, their line manager embodies organisational culture and interprets and communicates organisational strategy, direction and policies. It is typically the line manager who has the day-to-day role of ensuring the job is interesting and satisfying, showing appreciation and thanks for effort, and smoothing the path to development opportunities. The line manager also conducts performance reviews and helps the employee with performance development and career plans. The quality of line management clearly impacts on almost every aspect of working life, including the key engagement drivers.
- HR, as a function, has the responsibility of ensuring that line managers are equipped to do their job of managing people effectively. This implies good quality training and also the provision of policies, procedures and systems that are clear, fair, properly communicated and well-administered. In addition, the fact that bad experiences at work have a denting effect on engagement levels suggests that HR needs to ensure that these are handled professionally, promptly and fairly.

4.4 The performance link

Although engagement is now starting to gain credence as an academic construct, there is still relatively little evidence in the public domain that high levels of engagement bring about better organisational performance. Of course, this may not matter to companies who believe they have proved the link internally, to their own satisfaction. IES's second-phase research into employee engagement did not stray far into the realm of the engagement-organisational performance link, although we were able to show in one participating organisation (organisation 1) that in the quarter of the year during which the engagement survey was conducted, the stores with the best performance tended to be those with the highest engagement scores.

The lack of evidence has not prevented many organisations from investing considerable resources into the measurement and analysis of employee engagement, and the implementation of various initiatives designed to raise engagement levels. The belief that engagement does influence performance is clearly widely held.

4.5 Final thoughts

Engagement is a concept that has captured the imagination of managers and HR professionals alike, and the link between engagement and organisational performance is persuasive. There is, however, no easy answer as far as engagement is concerned – no simple pulling of one or two levers to raise engagement levels. Our research indicates that, although some aspects of working life emerge as reasonably consistent engagement drivers, others are more variable. Another finding is that engagement levels, and engagement drivers, vary considerably depending on the group of employees under consideration. There is no real substitute for understanding the workforce in depth, which implies good quality line management, a professional HR function, and senior management that is prepared to invest in firstly a thorough analysis of employee attitude survey data and secondly acting upon the results.

Our next step at IES, now that engagement is firmly established in the world of work and becoming accepted within academia, is to embark upon a literature review to synthesise current thinking and evidence.

Appendix 1: A Recap of Phase 1 Research

What is engagement?

The first step in our Phase 1 research was to investigate what HR professionals understood or meant when they used the term 'engagement'. A clear view of the behaviours demonstrated by the engaged employee emerged:

- belief in the organisation
- desire to work to make things better
- understanding of business context and the 'bigger picture'
- respectful of, and helpful to, colleagues
- willingness to 'go the extra mile'
- keeping up-to-date with developments in the field.

Engagement has clear overlaps with the more exhaustively researched concepts of commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour, but there are also differences. In particular, engagement is two-way: organisations must work to engage the employee, who in turn has a choice about the level of engagement to offer the employer.

IES defines engagement as:

'a positive attitude held by the employee towards the organisation and its values. An engaged employee is aware of business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organisation. The organisation must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employer and employee.'

Measuring engagement

Our analysis used data from IES's 2003 attitude survey of over 10,000 employees in 14 organisations in the NHS. Twelve attitude statements representing engagement were tested; all were found to 'sit together' reliably, to comprise a single **indicator of engagement**. Although tested within the NHS, the statements are not NHS-specific; they can be transferred to other organisations and sectors. If attitude survey space is at a premium, and organisations feel unable to include 12 statements, an engagement sub-set of five statements can be used instead. This sub-set can be safely used, as it represents the essence of engagement and has been tested for reliability. Positive responses to the engagement statements indicate:

- a positive attitude towards, and pride in, the organisation
- belief in the organisations' products/services
- a perception that the organisation enables the employee to perform well
- a willingness to behave altruistically and be a good team-player
- an understanding of the bigger picture and a willingness to go beyond the requirements of the job.

Engagement challenges

Further in-depth analysis of our NHS case-study data revealed that engagement levels can vary, in association with a variety of personal and job characteristics and with experiences at work. Some key findings were:

- engagement levels decline as employees get older — until they reach the oldest group (60 plus), where levels suddenly rise, and show this oldest group to be the most engaged of all
- minority ethnic respondents have higher engagement levels than their white colleagues
- managers and professionals tend to have higher engagement levels than their colleagues in supporting roles, although people in the latter group appear to owe greater loyalty to their profession than to the organisation in which they practise their craft
- engagement levels decline as length of service increases
- having an accident or an injury at work, or experiencing harassment (particularly if the manager is the source of the harassment) both have a big negative impact on engagement

- employees who have a personal development plan, and who have received a formal performance appraisal within the past year, have significantly higher engagement levels than those who have not.

The above findings show that organisations need to work hard to prevent, and minimise the impact of, bad experiences. They also need to ensure that employees' development needs (including the special needs of professionals) are taken seriously; pay attention to, and value the roles of, support staff; and to maintain the interest of longer-serving employees. The relatively high levels of engagement of the oldest employees, and of minority ethnic staff, suggest sources of untapped potential within some organisations.

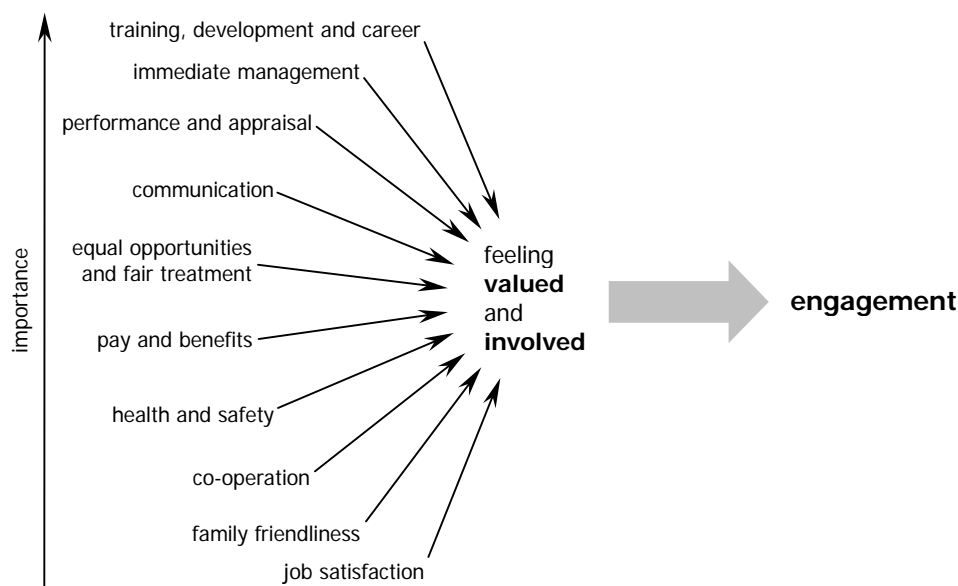
What drives engagement?

Research shows that committed employees perform better. If we accept that engagement is, as many believe, 'one step up' from commitment, it is clearly in the organisation's interests to understand the drivers of engagement. Analysis of the NHS case study data indicates that opinions about, and experiences of, many aspects of working life are strongly correlated with engagement levels. However, **the strongest driver of all is a sense of feeling valued and involved**. This has several key components:

- involvement in decision-making
- the extent to which employees feel able to voice their ideas, and managers listen to these views, and value employees' contributions
- the opportunities that employees have to develop their jobs
- the extent to which the organisation is concerned for employees' health and well-being.

The line manager clearly has a very important role in fostering employees' sense of involvement and value — an observation that is completely consistent with IES research in many different areas of HR practice and employment, all of which point to the critical importance of the employee-manager relationship.

The IES diagnostic tool



The IES engagement model illustrates the strong link between feeling valued and involved and engagement. In addition to the model, IES offers a **diagnostic tool** (above), which can be used to derive organisation-specific drivers from attitude survey data. Our findings suggest that many of the drivers of engagement will be common to all organisations, regardless of sector; however, some variability is likely, and the relative strength of each driver is also likely to be contingent upon the organisation being studied.

General lessons

Attempts to raise engagement levels are likely to founder, unless the following 'building blocks' are in place:

- good quality line management
- two-way communication
- effective internal co-operation
- a development focus
- commitment to employee well-being
- clear, accessible HR policies and practices, to which managers at all levels are committed.

Raising engagement levels looks easy, but of course it isn't; it requires a huge amount of effort and continuing investment to ensure that all of these basics are in place and working well. Embarking on a drive to increase engagement levels should not be undertaken lightly, bearing in mind the ease with which engagement can be shattered.

The study

IES research into employee engagement was promoted by the interest and involvement of several IES Research Networks Member companies. It proved more complicated than first envisaged, due to the lack of existing research in the area. IES explored the concept of engagement with member and client organisations, before embarking on original research into measuring engagement and establishing its main drivers. The database used for the research comprises 2003 attitude survey data from 14 organisations in the NHS (10,024 completed questionnaires). The full range of employee groups and job roles were represented – managerial, professional, technical and support (manual and administrative).

The full report also contains literature reviews on commitment and organisational citizenship behaviour, and a Royal Bank of Scotland case study.

The study was funded and supported by IES's motivation, well-being and retention Research Network.

Further research

IES would like to take its engagement research further, by testing the engagement measure and its drivers in other employment sectors. If your organisation carries out employee attitude surveys and would like to participate in leading-edge research, please contact Dilys Robinson (dilys.robinson@employment-studies.co.uk).

Appendix 2: Employee Engagement Survey

Confidential to the Institute for Employment Studies

Please answer the following questions as fully as you are able by ticking the boxes or writing in the spaces provided. Please return the completed questionnaire to IES in the reply-paid envelope provided. If you have any queries about the survey or completing the questionnaire, please contact Dilys Robinson at IES: telephone 01273 873122 or email dilys.robinson@employment-studies.co.uk. Thank you for your co-operation.

A. About you

We would like to know something about you, in order to understand your views.

1. What is your current job category? (please tick **one** box):

- Senior Manager 1
 Manager 2
 Professional 3
 Operational/Hands-on 4
 Support 5
 Other (please specify) 6

2. Do you work: Full-time? 1 Part-time (incl job share)? 2

3. Length of service with organisation: yrs mths

4. Are you: Male? Female?

5. What was your age last birthday? yrs

6. Do you have any children aged 16 or under living with you? Yes 1 No 2

7. Do you look after, or give special help to, and adult who is sick, disabled or elderly? Yes 1 No 2

8. Do you consider yourself to have a medical condition or disability which requires support in the workplace? Yes 1 No 2

9. What is your ethnic group? (These are the main headings of the codes that were used for the National Census: please choose **one**)

- White 1 Black or Black British 4
 Mixed 2 Chinese or Other Ethnic Group 5
 Asian or Asian British 3

B. Your views about your job

10. The following questions ask how you feel about working here and about the job you do. There are no right or wrong answers. Please work through this section quickly and indicate how far you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate number (*please circle one number on each line*).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Communication					
People are kept informed when changes occur in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
The information I need to do my job is readily available	1	2	3	4	5
The 'grapevine' is the most effective communication channel around here	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation provides useful feedback regarding management decisions	1	2	3	4	5
Pay and Benefits					
Good performance is rewarded fairly here	1	2	3	4	5
I am rewarded fairly in view of my experience	1	2	3	4	5
I am satisfied with my pay	1	2	3	4	5
Performance and Appraisal					
I am given regular feedback on my performance by my manager	1	2	3	4	5
My manager takes performance appraisal seriously	1	2	3	4	5
Feeling valued and involved					
I feel involved in decisions that affect my work	1	2	3	4	5
Managers here are keen to get employee views on key decisions	1	2	3	4	5
I get the opportunity to develop new and better ways of doing my job	1	2	3	4	5
I feel valued by senior management	1	2	3	4	5
Good suggestions from employees tend to get ignored here	1	2	3	4	5
I feel able to voice my ideas and opinions	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation is concerned about my health and well-being	1	2	3	4	5
I am treated with dignity here	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident that the results of this survey will be acted upon	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation has procedures that ensure decisions affecting employees are consistent	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation takes into account the concerns of employees when making decisions	1	2	3	4	5
Your training, development and career					
I am encouraged to develop new skills	1	2	3	4	5
My line manager takes employees development seriously	1	2	3	4	5
I am able to get time off work for training	1	2	3	4	5
I have many opportunities for training	1	2	3	4	5
I am given adequate training to do my current job	1	2	3	4	5
My training needs are regularly discussed	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have equal access to training and development opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation actively supports my continuing professional development	1	2	3	4	5
Job satisfaction					
There is a lot of variety in my job	1	2	3	4	5
I do interesting and challenging work	1	2	3	4	5
I get a feeling of accomplishment from my job	1	2	3	4	5
I find real enjoyment in my job	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am seldom bored with my job	1	2	3	4	5
Most days I am enthusiastic about my job	1	2	3	4	5
Overall, I am satisfied with my job	1	2	3	4	5
Commitment and engagement					
I speak highly of this organisation to my friends	1	2	3	4	5
I would be happy for my family and friends to use this organisation's products/services	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation is known as a good employer	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation has a good reputation generally	1	2	3	4	5
I am proud to tell others that I am a part of this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance	1	2	3	4	5
I find that my values and the organisation's are very similar	1	2	3	4	5
I always do more than is actually required	1	2	3	4	5
I try to help others in this organisation whenever I can	1	2	3	4	5
I try to keep abreast of current developments in my area	1	2	3	4	5
I volunteer for things outside my job that contribute to the organisation's objectives	1	2	3	4	5
I frequently make suggestions to improve the work of my team/department/service	1	2	3	4	5
Management					
My immediate manager is sensitive to work/life issues	1	2	3	4	5
My immediate manager lets me know how I am doing	1	2	3	4	5
I have a good working relationship with my immediate manager	1	2	3	4	5
My immediate manager supports me when things go wrong	1	2	3	4	5
Co-operation					
Unions and management work well together	1	2	3	4	5
Managers and employees work well together to solve problems	1	2	3	4	5
Co-operation between departments is good in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
Colleagues					
I am treated with respect by the employees I work with	1	2	3	4	5
I do not feel part of an efficient team	1	2	3	4	5
I have a good working relationship with my work colleagues	1	2	3	4	5
My colleagues can be relied upon when things get difficult in my job	1	2	3	4	5
Stress and work pressure					
I often feel I am under too much work pressure	1	2	3	4	5
The demands of the job seriously interfere with my private life	1	2	3	4	5
I have felt under constant strain recently	1	2	3	4	5
I have recently been losing sleep over my work problems	1	2	3	4	5
I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the pace of change here	1	2	3	4	5
The pace of change is too fast here	1	2	3	4	5
I feel emotionally drained by my work	1	2	3	4	5
I feel burned out by my work	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident in my ability to cope with work pressure	1	2	3	4	5

C. Training

11. How many days have you spent on formal, off-the-job training and development in the last 12 months? days
12. Have you had a formal performance appraisal/review in the last 12 months? Yes 1 No 2
13. Do you have a Personal Development Plan (PDP)? Yes 1 No 2
14. How do you view your access to less formal development opportunities (eg secondments, coaching, multi-disciplinary group working, special projects)?
- Excellent 1 Good 2 Adequate 3 Poor 4 Non-existent 5

D. Health and safety

15. Have you had any accidents or injuries at work (including minor ones) in the past 12 months?
16. How satisfied are you with the following? Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each statement by circling the appropriate number. (Please circle **one** number on **each** line)

	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Your physical working environment	1	2	3	4	5
Health and safety training in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
The cleanliness of the working environment	1	2	3	4	5
Your access to employee counselling	1	2	3	4	5
Your manager's attitude to health and safety issues	1	2	3	4	5
The quality of the equipment you use in your job	1	2	3	4	5
Your access to Occupational Health Services (excluding counselling)	1	2	3	4	5
Security in your workplace	1	2	3	4	5

E. Equal opportunities

17. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about equal opportunities in this organisation? Please indicate how far you agree or disagree with each statement by circling the appropriate number. (Please circle **one** number on **each** line)

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
People in this organisation with family commitments have equal career opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
Part-timers have equal access to career progression	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation actively promotes flexible working arrangements for its employees	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation provides good support for employees with family responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation provides a service to customers/clients that is free from discrimination	1	2	3	4	5
My work environment is free from bullying and harassment	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation has taken effective actions to prevent all forms of racial harassment	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident that effective action will be taken to tackle racial harassment when it occurs	1	2	3	4	5
Racial harassment is decreasing here	1	2	3	4	5

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Facilities for disabled employees are poor in this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation makes its positive commitment to Equal Opportunities clear	1	2	3	4	5
I feel I have a fair chance to apply for internal vacancies here	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation is slow to deal with cases of discrimination	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation is a 'family-friendly' employer	1	2	3	4	5
This organisation is good at supporting disabled employees	1	2	3	4	5
I feel that I am fairly treated here	1	2	3	4	5
The work environment is free from racial discrimination	1	2	3	4	5
Men and women have the same chance of doing well in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
To be accepted here, your face has to fit	1	2	3	4	5
My work environment is free from sexual harassment	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident that this organisation will act upon any reported incident of employees harassment	1	2	3	4	5
Requests to change work patterns are received positively here	1	2	3	4	5
Access to career progression is not equal for all groups	1	2	3	4	5

18. During the past 12 months, have you personally experienced any incidents of harassment or violence at work? Yes 1 No 2

If **no**, please continue with **Section F**

If **yes**, who did the harassing? (*please tick all that apply*)

- Colleague 1
- Your manager 2
- Another manager 3
- Customer/client 4
- Other(*please specify*) 5

F. Intention to stay or leave your current organisation

19. Which of the following statements most reflect your current intentions? (*please tick one box*)

- Plan to leave as soon as possible 1
- Likely to leave within the next year 2
- Likely to stay for at least another year 3
- Plan to stay for the foreseeable future 4

20. Compared with two years ago, how does this organisation rate as a place to work? (*please tick one box*)

- Better 1 The same 2 Worse 3 Don't know/Not applicable 4

G. Overall views and suggestions

21. The two best things about working here are:

- i)
-
- ii)
-

22. The two things that would most improve the quality of working life here are:

- i)
-
- ii)
-

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Please return this questionnaire to: Institute for Employment Studies, Mantell Building, Brighton, BN1 9RF
in the reply paid envelope provided.

Appendix 3: Employee Engagement and Related Indicators - Scales and Reliability

This appendix gives details of all the attitudinal indicators used in the engagement research.

Unless indicated, all statements are scored on a five-point scale ranging from one (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). Where a statement is negatively worded, the scoring has been reversed, to enable high scores to indicate positive views throughout. These statements are asterisked.

The statements are grouped according to statistical analysis which showed them to 'belong' together, with a high level of reliability or statistical robustness. Reliability is measured by using Cronbach's Alpha score. Scores of 0.7 and over are normally considered to show that the grouping is reliable. Only one of our indicators (co-operation) did not emerge as reliable using the 0.7 score as a rule of thumb; this is possibly because some of the organisations in our sample were not unionised, so employers in those organisations could not be expected to have a view about 'Unions and management work well together.' We retained the indicator for the second phase of our research as it had proved reliable in the first phase.

Engagement indicator

I speak highly of this organisation to my friends.

I would be happy for my friends and family to use this organisation's products/services.

This organisation is known as a good employer.

This organisation has a good reputation generally.

I am proud to tell others I am part of this organisation.

This organisation really inspires the very best in me in the way of job performance.

I find that my values and the organisation's are very similar.

I always do more than is actually required.

I try to help others in the organisation whenever I can.

I try to keep abreast of current developments in my area.

I volunteer to do things outside my job that contribute to the organisation's objectives.

I frequently make suggestions to improve the work of my team/department/service'

Reliability: 0.846

Related indicators

Feeling valued and involved

I feel involved in decisions that affect my work.

Managers here are keen to get staff views on key decisions.

I get the opportunity to develop new and better ways of doing my job.

I feel valued by senior management.

Good suggestions from staff tend to get ignored here.*

I feel able to voice my ideas and opinions.

The organisation is concerned about my health and well-being.

I am treated with dignity here.

I am confident that the results of this survey will be acted upon.

This organisation has procedures that ensure decisions affecting employees are consistent.

This organisation takes into account the concerns of employees when making decisions.

Reliability: 0.912

Co-operation

Unions and management work well together.

Co-operation between departments is good in this organisation.

Managers and employees work well together to solve problems.

Reliability: 0.585

Training, development and career

I am encouraged to develop new skills.

My line manager takes staff development seriously.

I am able to get time off work for training.

I have many opportunities for training.

I am given adequate training to do my current job.

My training needs are regularly discussed.

I feel I have equal access to training and development opportunities.

This organisation actively supports my continuing professional development.

Reliability: 0.923

Communication

People are kept informed when changes occur in the organisation.

The information I need to do my job is readily available.

The grapevine is the most efficient communication channel around here.*

This organisation provides useful feedback regarding management decisions.

Reliability: 0.731

Equal opportunities and fair treatment

I feel I am fairly treated here.

My work environment is free from bullying and harassment.

To be accepted here your face has to fit.*

I feel I have a fair chance to apply for internal vacancies here.

This organisation makes its positive commitment to equal opportunities clear.

This organisation provides a service to customers/clients that is free from discrimination.

People in this organisation with family commitments have equal career opportunities.

Part-timers have equal access to career progression.

This organisation actively promotes flexible working arrangements for its employees.

This organisation has taken effective actions to prevent all forms of racial harassment.

I am confident that effective action will be taken to tackle racial harassment when it occurs.

Racial harassment is decreasing here.

Facilities for disabled employees are poor in this organisation.*

This organisation is slow to deal with cases of discrimination.

This organisation is good at supporting disabled employees.

The work environment is free from racial discrimination.

Men and women have the same chance of doing well in the organisation.

My work environment is free from sexual harassment.

I am confident that this organisation will act upon any reported incident of employee harassment.

This organisation is a 'family-friendly' employer.

This organisation provides good support for staff with family responsibilities.

Requests to change work patterns are received positively here.

Access to career progression is not equal for all groups.*

Reliability: 0.917

Health and safety

Satisfaction is measured on a five-point scale ranging from one (very dissatisfied) to five (very satisfied), with the following aspects:

Your physical working environment.

Health and safety training in this organisation.

The cleanliness of the working environment.

Your access to employee counselling.

Your manager's attitude to health and safety issues.

The quality of equipment you use in your job.

Your access to Occupational Health Services (excluding counselling).

Reliability: 0.799

Job satisfaction

- There is a lot of variety in my job.*
- I do interesting and challenging work.*
- I get a feeling of accomplishment from my job*
- I find real enjoyment in my job.*
- I am seldom bored with my job.*
- Most days I am enthusiastic about my job.*
- Overall, I am satisfied with my job.*

Reliability: 0.927

Management

- My immediate manager is sensitive to work/life issues.*
- My immediate manager lets me know how I am doing.*
- I have a good working relationship with my immediate manager.*
- My immediate manager supports me when things go wrong.*

Reliability: 0.880

Pay and benefits

- Good performance is rewarded fairly here.*
- I am rewarded fairly in view of my experience.*
- I am satisfied with my pay.*

Reliability: 0.859

Performance and appraisal

- I am given regular feedback on my performance by my manager.*
- My immediate manager takes performance appraisal seriously.*

Reliability: 0.844

Colleagues

I am treated with respect by the employees I work with.

I do not feel part of an efficient team.*

I have a good working relationship with my work colleagues.

My colleagues can be relied upon when things get difficult in my job.

Reliability: 0.723

Stress and work pressure

I often feel I am under too much work pressure.*

The demands of the job seriously interfere with my private life.*

I have felt under constant strain recently.*

I have been losing sleep over my work problems.*

I feel emotionally drained by my work.*

I feel burned out by my work.*

I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the pace of change here.*

The pace of change is too fast here.*

Reliability: 0.922

Current career intentions

Respondents were asked to select one of the following:

Plan to leave as soon as possible.

Likely to leave within the next year.

Likely to stay for at least another year.

Plan to stay for the foreseeable future.

NB: this was a 'tick box' question rather than a series of attitudinal statements, so does not have a reliability score.