TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION .............................................................................................................................................. 2
   Public administration in a complex world ........................................................................................................... 2
   HRM is a strategic enabler to achieve organisational success ........................................................................... 2
   Leadership can help drive successful transformation ......................................................................................... 3
   Enhancing engagement enables employee driven innovation ......................................................................... 3
   The expert meeting: towards a framework for action ......................................................................................... 4

2. WHY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS ! .................................................................................................................. 4
   The role of working conditions and working relationships – anything new? .................................................. 4
   What exactly is motivation? ................................................................................................................................. 5
   What is the origin of motivation? ......................................................................................................................... 6
   When does willingness to act translate into action? ............................................................................................ 6
   What does engagement mean? ............................................................................................................................ 6
   Differentiation from satisfaction and commitment ............................................................................................ 8
   How can engagement be promoted? .................................................................................................................... 9

REFERENCES ...................................................................................................................................................... 13

Figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Examples of engagement definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Work engagement in the context of occupational psychology constructs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Leadership for engagement impact model</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. INTRODUCTION

Public administration in a complex world

1. Today’s public administrations face numerous challenges which appear to be increasingly intertwined, cross-jurisdictional, and less predictable. Globalization, the fast pace of technology, the impact of demographic and societal changes, and the shifting values of an increasingly diverse population all challenge public administrations to respond to the ever-changing diverse needs of the populations they serve. And this is occurring within the context of post-economic crisis fiscal consolidation and public sector downsizing. This fast changing world requires organisations to innovate, to use a diverse range of competencies to meet citizens’ expectations and to promote often tailor-made solutions for citizens and other stakeholders.

2. Processes of change are necessary, but public administrations are also experiencing such processes in ever-quicker succession. They must therefore prepare themselves for this world of increasing volatility, just as private enterprises do. It is important to respond to the needs of the citizens, customers and various other stakeholders in a service-oriented manner, to continually improve quality, and to increase productivity, in order to win back confidence and trust in public administration in areas where this has been lost. Particularly in service-oriented administration, this puts the emphasis on personnel as the essential factor for success. At the same time, the administration increasingly has to position itself competitively as an employer in order to recruit new talent and/or retain it in the long term.

3. Meeting these challenges will depend in part on internal HR policies to promote sustainable change, often grounded in governmental programmes. Success is highly dependent on motivated and engaged staff. Good leadership and collaboration is the foundation to shape a culture that is open to innovation and where the employees are part of the success.

HRM is a strategic enabler to achieve organisational success

4. The strategic orientation of human resources management (HRM) is playing an increasingly important role in supporting sustainable reform efforts in public administration. To improve innovative capacity in public administration, as well as to implement reforms on a sustainable basis, the administration needs employees who not only identify strongly with their job tasks as contributors to public value, but who also identify strongly with their employer and its organizational goals. In terms of the structure of the body of personnel, new strategies are needed that take into account the needs and expectations of a diverse and, in part, ageing workforce. In the future, 3 or 4 generations -- each with different values, needs and expectations (e.g. working conditions, work-life balance) -- will work alongside one another, raising new challenges of finding appropriate management and communication styles. It is important to utilise, maintain and foster their numerous and diverse competencies (e.g. intercultural competencies) in each phase of life (i.e. to value and foster diversity) in order to address the similarly diverse demands of citizens. This will require changes in knowledge management, with regard to, for example, intergenerational co-operation and knowledge transfer. The needs for such policies are often linked to the results of strategic workforce planning.

5. In the future, however, the workability of personnel will depend on more than the development of competencies within a framework of systematic, skills-based personnel development. Increasing importance is now being afforded to issues related to health prevention. Discussions about well-being or mental health in the workplace come on the agenda in order to secure the ability of administrations to perform on a lasting basis. This is particularly true given that many staff surveys indicate a need for action...
in the fields of leadership and co-operation, appreciation, people-focus, sense of accomplishment, and the organisation of working conditions and working relationships. The latter often extend beyond the immediate manager’s sphere of influence. Strategic and holistic approaches that co-ordinate the development of the organisation with that of personnel will be required in order to achieve modern and innovative change management.

Leadership can help drive successful transformation

6. Public administration is facing shifting demands on leadership and collaboration. There will be a need for transformational or inspirational leadership to change thinking patterns and promote acceptance for change and identification with the administrations’ goals. Leadership, much more than before, should address emotions and win the “hearts” of the employees. So-called soft skills, such as sensitivity and other personal competencies, will be much more needed in the future to foster good relationships between leaders and employees. A change in leadership skills is also required to promote diversity inside organizations to respond to the needs of diverse customers. These competencies, which are also required for staff members internally and externally, can be a valuable tool to promote trust.

7. The major challenges for leadership will be to support increasing individualization in HRM, to shape working conditions and to ensure the employee’s well-being in the workplace. These are essential pre-conditions to shape the culture for innovation. Innovation itself needs motivated and engaged employees.

Enhancing engagement enables employee driven innovation

8. A personnel policy that promotes performance and shapes the organisational culture for innovation must also specifically include employee motivation. Triggers that influence this include, for example, career opportunities and well-being in the workplace. Merely promoting work satisfaction, however, offers no guarantee that this will also lead to positive results in terms of meeting organisational goals. Employee engagement, as a concept at the organisational level, facilitates goal-directed action by employees with regard to the organisation’s core competencies or aims. Good leadership and co-operation can help strengthening employee engagement.

9. There are various approaches to fostering engagement, as well as a multitude of “levers” (approximately 60–70 in total). Above all, it is key to enable employees to participate and support them in aligning their own actions to the organisation’s goals (empowerment). This entails reconciling employees’ individual motives and expectations with the organisation’s objectives and also its possibilities. This institutional view is supplemented by individual exchange within the relationship between the employees and their direct managers, which unavoidably includes an emotional dimension.

10. On both levels, this places the emphasis on the design of the direct management relationship and of the job’s framework conditions. As personnel work and employee management becomes increasingly individualised, it is important to be aware of employees’ expectations of their managers, and of their organisation, in order to promote engagement in a goal-directed manner. Working relationships are therefore managed on the basis of strategies, structures, processes, personnel policy offers, and the respective system of leadership. Within the framework of innovative personnel management, managing the working relationship means being able to deploy an available portfolio of measures in everyday management situations in order to promote engagement in the individual case.

11. In this context, it is essential for the employer to be able to make offers in order to shape the working relationship (e.g. measures for personnel development, compensation, inclusion, reconciliation of family and work life as part of diversity management, and operational health promotion).
12. These instruments and offers should be designed in a way that accounts for the differences between individual expectations, and it should therefore be possible to implement them in a nuanced and customised way. A life-phase model can act as a structuring aid with regard to typical starting situations, according to life phase, for a good “overall employment deal” that therefore promotes engagement (Rousseau, 2005).

13. The connections between employee engagement and customer satisfaction have been thoroughly investigated – as has the influence on productivity. As yet, scientific research into how leadership influences employee engagement does not yet allow us to draw definitive conclusions.

The expert meeting: towards a framework for action

14. Engagement itself, as well as how leadership influences engagement, remains one of the “young disciplines” when viewed in a global context. This first expert meeting will address a trend that, on the one hand, is intended to support evidence-based personnel management and, on the other, identifies a management topic with a promising future. In comparison to input-focused topics (such as work satisfaction), measurements of engagement offer the additional possibility of focusing measurements more strongly on output and, in addition, of evaluating the effectiveness of any action including HRM taken.

15. On the occasion of the meeting, various examples are presented in the international context. These illustrate the strategic value afforded to promoting employee engagement. It will be essential to learn from examples of good practice, while keeping in mind the specific, needs, capacities and context of each administration. It is also important to learn from our mistakes to develop new strategies to shape the future of public administration.

16. Three questions are mainly in the focus:
   - Why do governments invest in engagement policies and suitable change techniques?
   - What do different concepts and approaches look like?
   - What are the obstacles and challenges of developing and implementing an engagement strategy? Are there risks as well?

17. As a result of the meeting a framework for a holistic approach of HRM based on a common understanding about the concept of engagement should be developed. Strong leadership and collaboration promotes staff engagement and this is the base to promote innovation.

2. WHY ENGAGEMENT MATTERS!

The role of working conditions and working relationships – anything new?

18. In the 1920s, a group of researchers carried out a study in the Western Electric Company’s Hawthorne Works to determine what influence a change of working conditions had on work performance. In the early 20th century, it was widely believed that partialisation of work tasks and improvement of the physical working environment would lead to greater efficiency at work. At the same time, no thought was given to the person actually carrying out the work and his/her subjective well-being. This approach was instrumental in driving forward mass production. The researchers at the Hawthorne Works were astonished to find that work performance improved significantly regardless of whether or not the conditions (e.g. lighting) were changed. The researchers concluded that work performance was not dictated solely by
objective conditions. Effort and performance also improved as a result of paying attention due to being observed and the interest taken in the work by managers and, in this case, researchers. Relevant factors included personal devotion and recognition – topics that are becoming increasingly important today in an era where individualisation is a recurring topic in leadership and modern human resources management.

19. These findings acted as a trigger for the human relations movement. From then on, the focus was widened to include the importance of mental and social factors that affect workers. For this purpose, measures and studies were increasingly carried out with the aim of increasing motivation and satisfaction in the workplace; this acted as a driving force for research into work-related motivation. Essentially, this was – and still is – about the influence of employee motivation on any organisation’s productivity and ability to perform including the public sector.

What exactly is motivation?

20. Motivation is a fundamental topic of psychological research but has been taken up more widely in recent decades by business economists, with a view to increasing enterprises’ innovative capacity and output in order to safeguard competitiveness and productivity. In the work context, the findings are primarily used to explain what motivates and drives employees in order to gear the organisation’s development in this direction. The design and quality of work and of processes and structures, as well as the use of IT and its work design, have a significant influence on employee motivation also in public administration.

21. Firstly, the term “motive” must be differentiated from “motivation”. Motives are relatively stable and persistent behavioural tendencies or preferences that vary in degree from one person to the other; these are activated by incentives and influence how we interpret our environment from our very own perception.

22. Motivation, on the other hand, forms the basis for goal-directed action – or, more precisely, the willingness to behave in a certain way – and is therefore a variable state that can be influenced. This includes thoughts and emotions that form the basis for a “…willingness to behave in a certain way, for a specific period and with a certain intensity in order to achieve a specific goal” (see Deci & Ryan, 1993).

23. A distinction must be made between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Intrinsic motivation relates to the attitudes and goals that form the basis for action and is therefore an impulse that comes from within, out of interest in the matter itself and to satisfy one’s own motives. This form of motivation is associated with better and longer-lasting performance.

24. Extrinsically motivated people are driven above all by external incentives, such as rewards. This can bring about a desired behavioural pattern in the short term but can disrupt performance in the long term (this is referred to as the overjustification effect). In other words, the employee only performs an activity out of a desire for the reward, which can lead to a slump in performance when the reward is withdrawn. Another explanation for this phenomenon is that the extrinsic reward might possibly undermine the feeling of self-determination if the person interprets the incentive as a form of control and external influence (Deci & Ryan, 1993). If we apply this to the work context, a wide range of studies fail to offer a uniform picture of the direct connection between financial incentives and performance (see, among others: Jenkins, Mitra, Gupta & Shaw, 1998; Bonner, Hastie, Sprinkle & Young, 2000). In addition to the overjustification effect described above, the so-called habituation effect could offer another explanation of why financial incentives do not per se lead to an improvement in performance (see Herzberg, Mausner & Snyderman, 1959). Habituation means, “that the capacity of a stimulus to elicit positive effect can diminish over time. This may result in mere indifference toward that stimulus (boredom) or, in the extreme, a highly negative evaluative response (hate)” (Byrne and Neuman, 1992, p.53).
What is the origin of motivation?

25. Approaches to explaining the origin of motivation made significant progress in the 20th century. Research focuses shifted from simple instinct and drive theories to complex explanatory models that consider not only biological and internal causes, but also external circumstances and the interactions between them.

26. Many approaches to explaining the origin of motivation are based on the theory of instrumentality. This states that an employee will be particularly well-motivated if they believe that their actions are likely to bring about a specific result, the result of their actions will lead to the desired consequences, and the result and its consequences are positive for them.

27. The theory of instrumentality is very widespread in practice, as it offers clear starting points for influencing staff and increasing motivation, even if the focus lies on extrinsic motivation and on people acting in a purely rational manner (Vroom, 1964).

28. The “job characteristics model” (Hackman & Oldham, 1976) is also frequently used to describe the origin of motivation in the work context; in addition to aspects of the work task, such as variety and autonomy, this model also calls on personal factors, such as perceived meaningfulness of the work and sense of responsibility, as factors to be optimised for intrinsic motivation.

When does willingness to act translate into action?

29. Since motivation, as described above, constitutes at first only a willingness to act, the question arises of when the motivated person actually goes on to act in order to achieve goals. For this to happen, they must “cross the Rubicon” (Rubicon Model according to Heckhausen, 1987).

30. The metaphor refers to the time of Caesar taking power, when he crossed the Rubicon with his troops in the direction of Rome. This amounted to a declaration of war against the Roman senate and, accordingly, a point of no return.

31. Crossing the Rubicon therefore represents taking the step from pure motivation to the planning and implementation-oriented phase. These decision-making and planning processes translate motivation into goal-directed action. If a person crosses this “Rubicon”, a feeling of resoluteness emerges and they begin to plan the things they specifically need in order to realise their intentions (Heckhausen, 1987).

32. The model clarifies that motivation is a necessary but insufficient condition for goal-directed action and explains why, as a rule, only weaker connections initially appear between intrinsic work motivation as a behavioural intention, on the one hand, and the company’s success as a target, on the other.

33. This is the starting point for a relatively new line of research addressing the topic of work/employee engagement.

What does engagement mean?

34. In literature and in practice, there are various definitions of employee engagement.
As the quote explains, the concept of work engagement refers to goal-directed action in line with the organisation’s goals. An engaged employee has therefore already crossed the Rubicon and will gear their behaviour towards achieving these goals as effectively as possible. Motivation and decision-making are therefore two processes that underlie engagement.

One popular strand of definition refers to engagement as an active, positive and work-related state that is characterised by energy, devotion and immersion in one’s own work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Engagement is therefore a behaviour-oriented state that is variable and that can therefore be influenced.

It is important to distinguish engagement from workaholism, as the latter implies a compulsive addiction to work that is associated with a lack of balance between work and leisure and complete surrender to work (Schaufeli, Taris & van Rhenen, 2008). This ties in with frequent current debates relating to presenteeism – and in this case sheds a rather negative light. There are numerous and partly different definitions in the scientific literature about presenteeism. In general we find a different understanding, for example between the Scandinavian countries as well as Germany and the USA. Presenteeism is defined mostly as the behaviour of an employee to keep on working while being sick (s. Aronson et.al. 2000). The US focuses much more on the loss of labour productivity arising from the fact that employees are limited by health problems (primarily chronic diseases) in their work and remain below their workload (s. Burton et al., 1999).
Engagement, on the other hand, is characterised by achieving a balance between work and leisure and is associated with positive well-being, enthusiasm and self-actualisation.

39. Work Engagement means that employees.....

...like to involve themselves and their ideas during working (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008) and experience positive emotions which help them to generate new ideas and build their own resources during work (Bakker 2009/2011) relevant to build innovation capacities.

...like to ask for feedback and support, if needed (Bakker, 2009; 2011) relevant for strengthening resilience and self-initiative.

...work full of energy without suffering from burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010) -relevant for well-being and mental health in the workplace, healthy leadership

...are able to detach from work (Sonnenstag, Binnewies & Mojza, 2010) relevant for HR-policies focussing on the reconciliation of work and family, Work life-Balance and Corporate Health Management.

40. Engagement can therefore be categorised among the current strands of health promotion and healthy leadership style. It is not about considering why people suffer from burnout and preventing this or reducing the risk; rather, it is about considering how one can promote engagement and health and therefore act preventively instead of reactively and also safe costs looking at the increase of sickness days in many cases.

41. In addition, the promotion of work engagement shows a clear, significant correlation with improved performance and customer satisfaction (see Bakker, 2011; MacLeod & Clarke, 2011). The positive correlation between engagement and performance is due to the person’s positive and optimistic attitude, which boosts creativity and solution orientation; good health, which allows the person to mobilise all of their energy; the active seeking of feedback and support; and the positive infection and inspiration of others in their environment (Bakker, Demerouti & Sanz-Vergel, 2014).

Differentiation from satisfaction and commitment

42. Within the framework of occupational psychology research, investigations are also made into job satisfaction and commitment. However, these concepts must be distinguished from work engagement.

43. Job satisfaction is related to work engagement because both constructs encompass an emotional aspect of the working activity (Rich, 2006), but a distinction must nevertheless be drawn between the two:

44. Whereas work engagement relates to individual behaviour and involvement in work, the expression of job satisfaction reflects an evaluation of how the desired and actual working conditions compare to one another. Job satisfaction can therefore be seen as a stance on or attitude to the work and its conditions, with regard to whether the work is conducive to the fulfilment of relevant needs (von Rosenstiel et al., 2005). Satisfaction does not automatically entail active participation and exertion of energy (Rich, 2006), so there is also a risk of inertia or maintaining an existing status quo. This can explain the weak direct relationships between job satisfaction and productivity (Vroom, 1964; Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985; Petty, McGee & Cavender, 1984; Judge, Thoresen, Bono & Patton, 2001). Furthermore, the findings are not clear, since even less-satisfied employees perform their function when they work to rule. This postulation demonstrates that the concept of engagement is distinct: engaged employees participate beyond the expected level (“work-to-rule”) and cooperate actively to the success of the organisation.
Commitment, as a further work-related construct, refers to the extent to which an employee feels connected to their organisation as a whole. There are three types: normative, continuance and affective.

Normative commitment refers to the individual’s commitment to the organisation because of overarching values and standards.

The key element of continuance commitment is that the employee is committed to the organisation based on a weighing up of alternatives and, therefore, based on a process of calculation.

The continuance and normative commitments also once again underline that acting in the spirit of performing one’s duty can also have a positive link with performance.

The third type, affective commitment, includes the employee’s emotional connection and identification with the organisation and is a strong indicator of conscious willingness to remain in the organisation, not because of duty or a lack of alternatives but because the person wants to (Allen & Meyer, 1991).

When the constructs of engagement and commitment are considered, it becomes clear that their content overlaps with regard to identification with work, but that engagement takes things a step further. Engagement encompasses not only the emotional connection but also actual behaviour and participation for the sake of the organisation’s goals.

**How can engagement be promoted?**

In summary, it can be concluded that engaged employees feel a sense of belonging to their organisation and duties, are motivated to involve themselves, and report increased satisfaction with their work and working conditions. Accordingly, the relationships between work engagement and other constructs come about because these are conditions and/or consequences of engagement (see Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Work engagement in the context of occupational psychology constructs](image-url)
As shown here, engagement is not a stable property; rather, it refers to a variable state exhibited by a person, so there are various approaches to promoting engagement. However, these should all enable employees to participate and to align their own actions with the organisation’s goals (“cross the Rubicon”), as well as providing them with support during this process. In the work context, the main considerations in this regard are leadership and the design of the job’s framework conditions.

The direct management or working relationship is one key factor. Here, it is important not to practice a purely transactional relationship between manager and employee based on the fulfilment of agreed standards, but also to supplement this with an inspirational leadership style. By doing so, the manager sets an example for work engagement, inspires the employees to work towards a shared, overarching goal, and provides them with individual support in their independent work and innovation, so that they feel involved and identify with their own duties; in this way, engagement and therefore performance can be elevated beyond the transactionally agreed “base level”.

Another important element in the design of the working relationship is the psychological contract. This includes mutual, subjective expectations on the part of the employee (e.g. appreciation, compatibility of private and professional life) and the employer (e.g. engagement, loyalty). The psychological contract therefore goes beyond a reciprocal relationship consisting of the duties and financial remuneration defined in the employment contract. Accordingly, the psychological contract tackles the aforementioned problem of purely monetary rewards by addressing employees’ needs and values. In order to benefit from engaged employees in the longer term, it is up to the manager to broach, clarify and – where possible coordinate mutual expectations of this kind in staff meetings. However, in order to respond to the motives and needs of employees, the manager must have access to instruments and measures from the employer, through a system of holistic personnel management, to enable them to make a needs-based offer. Examples of this include forms of work that are tailored to different life stages, such as mobile working, part-time work or teleworking, so that employees’ private obligations, such as care activities, can be considered (see Hecker & Behrens, 2013). Psychological contracts are also able to foster a healthy work engagement as well (Parzefall & Hakanen, 2010).

A manager should not, however, neglect the design of working conditions as a secondary area of action, as these are among the basic prerequisites for productivity. This issue takes on particular importance in the context of demographic change, ageing and diverse workforces, and cooperation between multiple generations in one company. Employees must, for example, have the necessary competencies and resources to perform their duties and fulfil the job demands often fixed in job profiles or job descriptions. In addition to an example set by managers, there should be a process of exchange with the employees. This continuing process is important in order to ascertain what employee’s motives and needs are. Knowing about motives and need fulfilment is essential in order to “cross the rubicon” and to engage in their work as effectively as possible (see Figure 3).
56. The goal is therefore to improve working relationships and work organisation, as well as boosting cooperation within and between teams, in order to promote and increase employees’ willingness and ability to perform.

57. Enhancing staff engagement requires integrated approaches and a sophisticated system of measurement and evaluation (Guest, 2014). It is also to be recommended to develop an engagement agenda to enhance staff engagement (Guest, 2014)
The Engagement Agenda: core practices that may help to enhance engagement

1. Select staff with the prosperity for engagement
2. Train staff for engagement
3. Invest in human capital and employability
4. (Re)-Design jobs to maximize employee autonomy, challenge, variety, skill utilization and scope for learning and development
5. Provide strong organizational support
6. Reward and promote managers using their ability to engage employees as a key criterion
7. Ensure fairness of treatment and trust in management, using a range of voice mechanisms to achieve this
8. Ensure extensive and effective two-way communication
9. Create a context that reinforces job security and flexible working
10. Adapt a strategic human resource strategy that reflects the values of engagement and recognizes that need to integrate the components of an engagement system “outlined above.

REFERENCES


