



BUYING AND
MERCHANDISING
OPERATIONS
RESEARCH EVENT

Vista Ridge DECA
Vista Ridge High
School
200 South Vista
Ridge Boulevard
Cedar Park, Texas
78613

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Problem: Despite IHOP's family-friendly environment, the employees feel under-appreciated by their employers.

ABOUT IHOP



Description of the business or organization: IHOP, which stands for "International House of Pancakes," is a restaurant chain focused on serving breakfast foods 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The diner is known for its family-friendly environment, wide variety of breakfast items, and affordable dining.

Description of the Community: A great aspect of the Austin area is the large amount of family activity. This gives IHOP the perfect opportunity to cater to the families of Austin. The IHOP franchise chosen for this project is located in Cedar Park, Texas, 17 miles north of downtown Austin. Citizens that live near the IHOP located in Cedar Park enjoy living a comfortable lifestyle with a higher-than-average median household income of \$75,218. The Cedar Park area has an income per capita of 22.9% greater than Texas' average and 13.1% greater than the national average.

Overview of the business current culture and employee engagement strategies: IHOP's current culture is dedicated to serving families and people of all ages by offering friendly customer service. Their devotion to their customers tends to neglect the needs of the employees. Employee benefits are currently offered to the corporate employees, but are not available to the franchise employees.



Research Methods Used in Study:



We utilized both primary and secondary research methods to evaluate IHOP's current employee engagement strategies.

Process used to conduct selected research methods:

We interviewed the manager, went to IHOP for observational studies, conducted a focus group of students at Vista Ridge High School, thoroughly investigated websites, and analyzed print media.







Research Methods

Primary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- In Store Manager Interview- Observational Visits at IHOP	Secondary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Conducted Focus Group- Internet Fieldwork- Book Analysis
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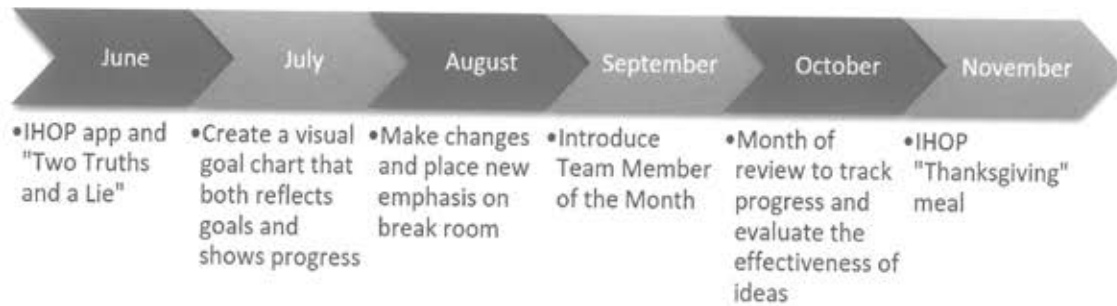
Findings and Conclusions:

From the primary research, we found that many employees are not aware of national IHOP goals and that management failed to play a major role in the day-to-day IHOP functions. Findings from our secondary research revealed the root of the problem pertains to low employee engagement, how to improve it, and how to create a supportive work environment. Effective management allows employees to truly believe in the company's vision, and with this confidence, employees will feel they have the resources available to accurately display IHOP's vision and culture.

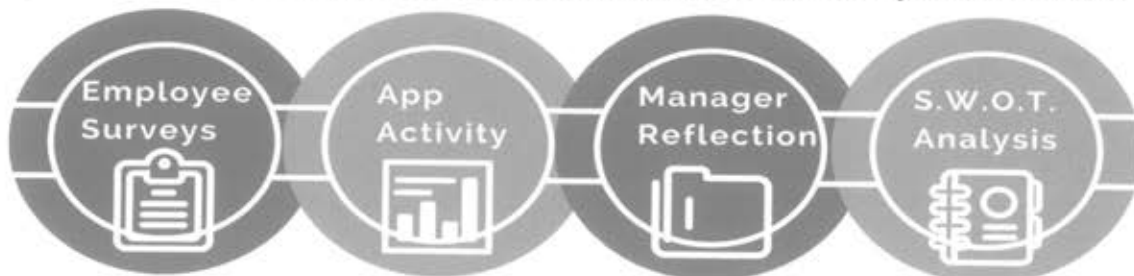
Proposed Strategic Plan: **F.A.M.I.L.Y**

F - FORM RELATIONSHIP 	F - "Two Truths and a Lie" Create positive relationships that encourage a family environment, effectively reflecting IHOP's vision.	A - Thermometer Goal Chart Illustrate the goals in a visual form to show progress and increase employee motivation
A - ADDRESS GOALS 		
M - MAINTAIN CULTURE 	M - IHOP "Thanksgiving" Continuously promote a culture of family values in the workplace	I - "Give a Smile" Instill support among employees through public or anonymous input from within the IHOP app
I - INSTILL SUPPORT 		
L - LEARN TO LEAD 	L - IHOP App - Suggestion "box" Inspire effective leadership by learning from one another	Y - Redesign Break Room Create an environment that offers entertainment in the workplace.
Y - YOUTHFUL ATMOSPHERE 		

Proposed activities and timelines:

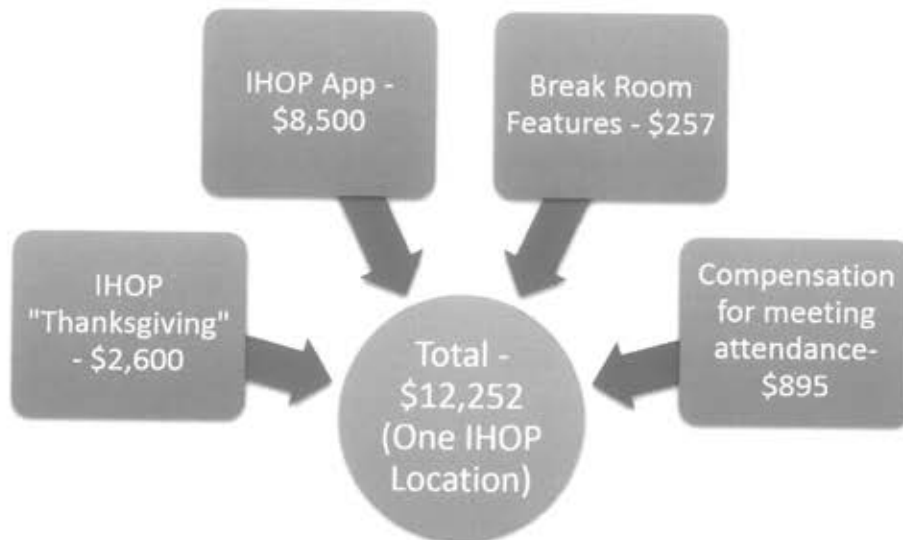


Proposed metrics or key performance indicators to measure plan effectiveness:



These metrics will allow managers to assess their IHOP's employee engagement as well give corporate an opportunity to rank each IHOP competitively.

Budget:



The total expenditures will be \$12,252 to cover the cost of implementing the activities associated with FAMILY. The return on investment is calculated to be approximately 37%.