



Employee Engagement

“Eighty percent of success is showing up.”

Woody Allen

Was Woody Allen right? Is the success of an organization merely dependent on the ability of employees to show up for work every day and “do the time,” or is there more to it? Is it just another HR buzzword, or is employee engagement something organizations should carefully consider? If you are ready to lose your best and brightest to the organization down the street, on the other side of town, or across the country, then perhaps you have no need to read the rest of this article. If, however, you have noticed an uneasiness rising in the ranks, perhaps it is time to develop a plan to address employee engagement.

What exactly is employee engagement? Simply put, it is the level of loyalty and connection an employee demonstrates toward an organization. Employees are engaged when they exhibit a positive attitude toward the organization, express a commitment to remain employed by the organization, and go the extra mile to satisfy customers in order to elevate the success of the organization. In fact, studies show that employee engagement is a more obvious sign of productivity than employee satisfaction.

An international workforce study released by Towers Perrin in February of 2006 titled *Winning Strategies for a Global Workforce* included the results of a survey distributed to approximately 86,000 full-time workers. According to Bill

Leonard of the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM), the study concluded that 25 percent of workers are actively disengaged, 60 percent of workers are moderately engaged, and the remaining workers are considered fully engaged. Towers Perrin defines fully engaged as “willing and able to give sustained discretionary or extra effort” to help their organizations to succeed.

Engaged employees are loyal and passionate about their job. An organization concerned about developing engaged employees focuses on what their employees do well, helps them to develop professionally, and recognizes their contribution to the success of the organization.

What are your company’s greatest assets? Considering a 2003 Brookings Institute study, you may be surprised. In 1982, 62 percent of organizations’ market value came from tangible assets: products, machines, buildings, and so forth. Just 38 percent came from intangible assets: intellectual property, brand name, and the quality of the workforce. By 2002, the percentages had reversed. *The vast majority of value is now comprised in a company’s intangible assets.*

It is relatively easy for your competitors to develop a “knock-off” of your product or to offer a similar service. But it is difficult to reproduce the aptitude, dedication, and creativity found within an engaged workforce. This is your company’s creative edge. It is what distinguishes a leading organization from an also-ran.

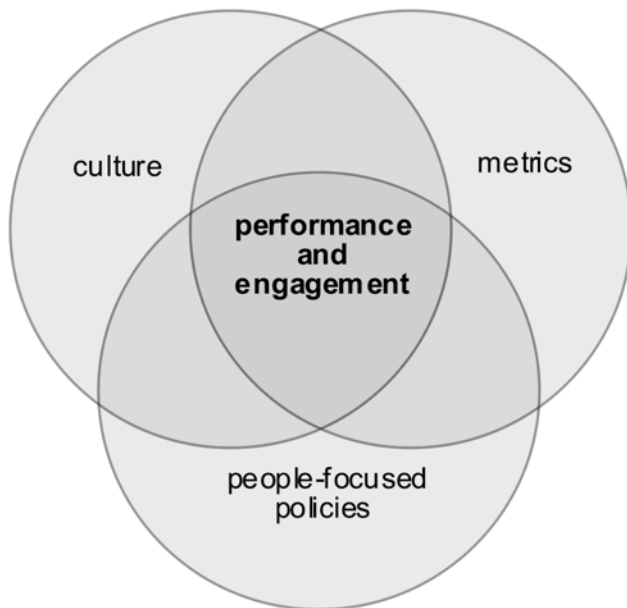
It is clearly in the best interest of your organization to keep your employees engaged.

According to Towers Perrin, “If companies could take just one step to increase engagement everywhere they operate, a dedicated emphasis on training and development would be it. In every country, virtually without exception, the availability of training opportunities and the ability to access such training to improve skills are core elements in driving employee engagement.”

Measuring Success!

How to Cultivate Engaged Employees

Pete Fornal and DiAnn Sanchez of the Society of Human Resource Management note, “Organizations that fail to monitor their employee retention will be at risk of losing key critical talent. Employers think they are going to have plentiful workers, but that is not the case. With the changing demographic forecast, labor shortage and employee discontentment, organizations will be challenged to make employee retention a strategic business imperative.” Employee engagement is not optional; it is essential to the success of the corporation.



Culture consists of a foundation of leadership, vision, values, effective communication, a strategic plan, and HR policies that are focused on the employee.

Continuous Reinforcement of People-Focused Policies exists when senior management provides staff with budgets and resources to accomplish their work, and empowers them.

Meaningful Metrics measure factors that are essential to the organization’s performance. Because so much of the organization’s performance is dependent on people, such metrics will naturally drive the people-focus of the organization and lead to beneficial change.

Organizational Performance and Engagement ultimately leads to high levels of trust, pride, satisfaction, success, and believe it or not, fun.

Thankfully, there are steps an organization can take to head-off the exodus out the door. First, and most importantly, employee engagement cannot simply be a corporate policy; it must be a process owned and embraced by managers and employees. It must become the corporate culture.

1. Recognize the importance of measuring success (more frequently than once per year) using performance measures. You cannot measure engagement until you can identify “above and beyond” contributions. Job descriptions and employee expectations are essential.
2. Exceptionally engaged managers will produce engaged employees. Engagement begins at the top and works its way down. Keep in mind, we are not talking about mandates; we are talking about a culture shift. This is engagement by example.
3. Identify and tear down the obstacles that are standing in the way of your employees’ success. Remember, their success is your success.
4. Treat employee engagement as a process. It is the responsibility of the organization to create an environment of continuous learning, measurement, and improvement. This takes time, but it is time well spent.

Did You Know?

- 77% of more than 1,000 workers surveyed reported they are either actively or passively looking for a new job; 39% of these workers reported looking for a new job while at work
- 94% reported they spend up to three hours at work networking or searching online job postings
- In the last six months, 43% of workers have had an increase in their work hours and 68% have increased job related responsibilities, yet the increases in responsibilities and workload have not led to increases in compensation
- The average employee can now expect to cover 3-5 careers and hold 7-15 specific jobs over the course of a lifetime

Sources: Society for Human Resource Management and Career Journal Online

Recommended Reading: [The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First](#) by Jeffrey Pfeffer, Harvard Business Press, Boston, Massachusetts (1998)

Measured Success! Newsletter

If you have received this e-zine and want to be removed from our mailing list, please reply to this e-mail with REMOVE in the subject or send an e-mail to info@hrconsults.com. If you have received this e-zine and want to be included in our mailing list, please send an e-mail request to info@hrconsults.com. HR Consultants, Inc. will never trade or sell our mailing list.

HR Consultants, Inc.
160 JARI Drive, Suite 180
Johnstown, PA 15904
814-266-3818 / 814-266-0189 (fax)
info@hrconsults.com
www.hrconsults.com

- An **ISO 9001:2000** Certified Management and Human Resource Consulting Firm
- Certified as a **Woman Business Enterprise** through the PA Department of General Services
- Approved vendor for the Commonwealth of PA, Office of Administration Personnel Training and Consulting ITQ Contract (ME 181417)

