



## Dear Readers,

The hot topic of recent years **Employee Engagement** has been on the top of most of organizations' list of key strategic objectives. Of course, employee engagement is not a new concept but rather just a new word for very old key, performance success factors: **motivation, passion and commitment.**

Old or new, it is essential in today's crazy, business environment that organizations create a working environment where people do not feel "misused, overused, underused or abused." Of course, like most people issue related concepts, employee engagement does not come with a golden recipe for success. Each organization has to find the strategies that suit its needs and its business. To do this it is essential that we have a clear perception of what employee engagement is all about and commitment to achieving it. To help in this endeavour we have chosen three articles that were published recently in the January issue of Training & Development magazine, together with interesting bits and pieces that we have collected from our extensive investigation into the subject.

The conclusion drawn? Without a doubt, employee engagement is worth the effort since it correlates directly to individual, group and organizational performance in areas such as retention, business development & customer service and loyalty!

Derek Stockley

# EMPLOYEE

## What's the Big Deal about Employee Engagement?

By Paula Ketter

"Engagement is made up of rational and emotional commitment. On the rational side, it is largely about getting enough compensation and development opportunities to make it worth your while. Emotional commitment is the ever elusive love of your job and love of your manager or organization. Survey data has proven that the emotional side of engagement is four times more powerful than the rational side when it comes to driving employee retention and productivity. In fact one specific finding shows that when employees move from being disengaged to highly engaged, their productivity improves 20 percentage points."

"Many engagement studies have used different definitions of engagement to come up with 26 key drivers of engagement including among others: doing exciting and challenging work, having career growth and learning and development opportunities, working with great people, receiving fair pay, having supportive management and being recognized valued and respected. **The top drivers of engagement come down to the employee's connection between their work and organization success and employee's belief that his work matters to the organization.** Both these drivers are determined by senior leadership's communication with employees." But it is not all up to management, employees must also take responsibility by "asking for what they want and expressing their feelings about worth, their jobs and their career aspirations." In this article there is also a detailed analysis of the importance of adopting a specific engagement model and a clear engagement strategy. Of course it is strongly highlighted that "there is no one-size-fits-all solution to creating an engaged workforce."

Source: T+D Magazine – January 2008

Engagement statistics: "21% of the global workforce is engaged, while 38% is disengaged, leaving 41% who are not sure whether they like their jobs or not." Research by Towers Perrin-ISR



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### ENGAGEMENT

What is the connection between learning and engagement?

It is "critical to the success of an organization. Being engaged means more than showing up everyday -- it means having a passion for excellence in what we do and a desire to build a great team."

"Through learning, our employees build the knowledge and skills needed for their current and future jobs." But that is not enough. "What people learn must be applied back to the work place. This is where employee engagement kicks in. An engaged employee has the desire, motivation and even the compulsion to help the company grow and to give discretionary effort needed to improve his own performance, a team's performance and ultimately the company's performance." Results from studies of our employee opinion survey data show "divisions with high engagement scores... also have high scores on questions related to learning and development."

Jim Owens, CEO  
Caterpillar

## Actions to Deal with Disengaged Employees

The actions below are listed in order of effectiveness beginning with the most effective and ending with the least effective.

- Discussion or Counseling with employee and supervisor
- Determine causes of disengagement and act to resolve them
- Address disengagement during performance appraisal
- Provide mentoring / coaching for disengaged employees
- Focus efforts and resources on engaged employees
- Involve co-workers to positively influence disengaged employees
- Ignore disengaged workers
- Focus solely on performance

Source: ASTD Employee Engagement Study

## 10 Ms of Employee Engagement

by Chris & Mel Wildermuth

“There are 10 Ms of engagement. Nine of these operate in three separate but deeply connected dimensions: **organization culture, the job and the person**. The final factor connects the dots between culture, job and personal issues. The four Ms that characterize engagement friendly **cultures** are:

- **Model** symbolizes integrity. Organizations which promote and reward authentic employees impose exemplary punishment for ethical violations and demonstrate unimpeachable commitment to clear slate values. The result? Employees see themselves as better people as they fight for worthwhile causes.
- **Metropolis** describes an organization characterized by camaraderie, support and respect. Positive social interactions bring acceptance and safety to work, which is crucial to engagement. After all, workers can't focus on challenging tasks when they are overwhelmed by fear or social isolation.
- **Magnate** represents acknowledgement and appreciation. Engaged employees know how their job fits into the “big picture” and why it matters. Magnate organizations allow everyone to share in the celebration of significant achievements.
- **Moderation** governs employees' energy. In short, workers cannot feel exhausted and be engaged at the same time. Moderation reminds us that people need to recharge their batteries. Few work cultures offer perfect conditions. An engaging job could be an asset but let's face it some jobs are simply more engaging than others. In general two Ms characterize engagement friendly **jobs**:
- **Manager** represents empowerment. Employees seem more engaged when they have some decision making power and generate a sense of control over their jobs.

- **Moon** symbolizes learning. In general, people are more engaged when activities tax their energy and intellect. This factor feeds employees' confidence and sense of accomplishment, adding meaning to the job. The above two factors remind us of the importance of job design. Rich and challenging jobs engage workers. The three Ms that characterize highly active and engaged **employees** are:

- **Mirror** relates to people who reflect a healthy self-esteem. When employees are strong in the mirror factor, they have a sense of self, are proud of their accomplishments and may not need constant reinforcement or support from others.
- **Malleability** symbolizes change resiliency and flexibility. In a competitive and lean work environment, malleability helps employees adjust to multiple hats and learn new tasks.
- **Microphone** characterizes employees who are unafraid to speak for themselves. The microphone effect helps them ask for help and improve their work conditions.

But the glue that ties it all together is MATCH.

- **Match** recognizes that people are passionate about different jobs. People's personality and talents matter. Match by definition is a key requirement for engagement because passion cannot be taught. Passion is the result of doing what one was born to do.

The article goes on to highlight the importance of personality in engagement as well as the performance improvement implications. In terms of the latter four solutions for increasing employee engagement are highlighted: **Educate Leaders, Encourage networks, champion work-life balance and facilitate match.**

Source: T+D Magazine – January 2008

### Who has responsibility for engaging employees?

All managers (29%), Human Resources (22%), All Employees (16%), Executive Team (14%), Other (10%), CEO (7%) CLO (2%).

Source: ASTD Engagement Study

“All generations want balance, and all generations want satisfaction at work, they also want to have a good manager who appreciates them.”

Beverly Kaye,  
Career Systems Intl

“ENGAGEMENT is built on time, commitment and consistent monitoring.”

C&M Wildermuth



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