



How do you engage your employees on the job?

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orker engagement involves not

only mobilizing commitment, but also directing it towards a clear, shared mission and ideology (identification with organization). A shared mission gives employees a sense of transcendence, or being part of something “bigger than themselves”. By tying commitment to a value system rather than a CEO (who is imperfect) or a business goal (that has no meaning in itself and is temporary), employees become unified in one purpose and will have higher levels of commitment to the company. Once a company has a clear ideology in place, then they are able to hire based on this value system. By doing so, the company is able to find a good fit between the worker and the corporation, which safeguards the employee’s engagement (e.g., reducing turnover and absenteeism). It is also critical that the company hires managers that not only embrace company values, but also esteem workers as well. Krueger and Killham (2005) cited that a positive relationship with a supervisor has significant effects on employee engagement. Thus, supervisors are crucial in determining how engaged employees will be. Another element of establishing engagement involves “selling” the company to the employee or making them “believers” in it. This involves value-based orientations and training seminars as well as building a sense of tradition within the company (e.g., company lunches, ceremonies, etc.). As a result, employees will take pride in

the company they work for, thus increasing their level of engagement.

Another strategy that will increase pride is showing the worker that the organization cares about them. Developing and dispensing an employee survey that measures job satisfaction on a regular basis, demonstrates to the employees that the company appreciates them (rewarding work environment). The organization can troubleshoot via surveys, thus providing practical solutions and interventions to less than desirable working conditions. The employer can also evaluate which benefits are more important to the workers by surveys, thus making the most out of their rewards. Other simple steps to improving the worker’s environment involves recognition (celebrating significant personal and company accomplishments), decision-making authority (freedom to make decisions), and communication forums (to improve day-to-day work environment) (Roberts & Davenport, 2002). Thus, by empowering the employees, organizations improve commitment and engagement.

Another critical factor in improving engagement is by creating a work environment that is challenging and enriching (career development). Studies show that engaged employees tend to be more challenged and less frustrated at work as opposed to “not engaged” or “disengaged employees” (Krueger & Killham, 2005). Research also shows that job engagement is related to how much organizations offer career and learning opportunities for the employees to develop themselves (Roberts & Davenport, 2002). Managers in corporations need to be proactive in making sure that their employees’ personal development is being cultivated and not left

stagnant. By doing so, employees will feel motivated and act more committed.

Lastly, with 60% of the workforce doing only enough to get by, it is essential to get them engaged (Hundley, Jacobs, & Drizin, 2007). Linkage analysis studies have shown that employee engagement is significantly related to business performance. Steve Bates (2004) states in relating to this population, "...they say that the large middle group—those who aren't excited about their jobs but could be—is where most of the improvement can be expected." This is because disengaged employees are such a large portion of the workforce. By incrementally improving this large population's engagement by 10 percent, business performance could improve drastically as a result.