

A Powerful Combination: Effective Managers With Engaged Employees



Organizations that effectively lead engaged employees realize significant advantages over their competitors. Benefits are many, including those tied directly to improved financial results. Stepping back to assess your strategic approach to leading engaged employees can be enriched by considering a few key practices that unleash greater effectiveness and results in your organization.

Inspire—share passion.

While it's important to paint reality, even less-than-encouraging news can be shared in a positive way. Consider the possible; set expectations to be positive.

Hire engage-able team members.

Mental agility and the ability to adapt to rapidly changing conditions or necessary modifications are competencies that bring versatility to unique organization circumstances. These individuals have a keen interest in learning and exploration, and have the ability to see patterns across complex problems—they just need to be enabled.

Earn trust daily.

Constant, authentic contact and a caring approach show genuine interest in the well-being of employees. Add consistency in messaging and credibility is enhanced. Engaged employees often know they are sought after—whether inside or outside their current organization. Lack of these basic skills in their leaders can be a driver for them to seek change.

Stress employee “ownership”—tailor coaching.

The stark reality is that many companies no longer have the capacity to retain only average performers. Engaged team members may choose to leave if they see obvious performance issues not being dealt with in a timely, up-front, or consistent way. Organizational fit, or lack thereof, is another reality of performance that needs to be addressed—not only for the current state of the organization but for the future as well.



Reinforce line of sight—visualize the destination.

The connectivity of daily efforts and results to organizational objectives and goals brings reality into focus. The leader must continuously share future expectations as well as future plans for the organization.

Share feedback.

Immediate, ongoing, and candid feedback is a signature approach that engaged employees are seeking from their leaders. Giving feedback simply means telling people how they're doing at work. Two-way feedback means giving and receiving feedback—be prepared to listen to what others have to say, without being defensive; listening for ways to improve your own performance and that of the business. Feedback motivates people to perform well consistently. The reality is that feedback isn't often provided or provided often enough.

Communicate even more—talk and listen.

As important as sharing your wisdom and ideas is, it is equally important to know when to embrace one of the most underutilized leadership skills: listening. Leading from the inside out by realizing the value in unleashing others' thoughts and ideas fosters creativity that benefits the leader, the employee, and the organization.

Capitalize on employee strengths.

Tapping the strengths of the engaged achieves even greater results and it's not just knowing your strength in subject knowledge. It's zeroing in on strengths of talent, skills, and knowledge— and capitalizing on the strongest connections across them. Individuals who are aware of their strengths are more likely to perform consistently, happily, and successfully. Excellent workplaces focus on the "strengths-mix" of the whole team and deploy individuals for optimal impact. Maximizing strengths becomes a positive self-perpetuating circle.

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Get to know team members— model the engaged.

While this might make you vulnerable, it can be the breakthrough to relationships that are the basis of even greater results. Of course, it involves checking your own engagement first. Are you truly a role model or are you in need of a tune-up or change?

These suggestions along with other sound, fundamental leadership traits and attributes drive heightened engagement, retention, and ongoing commitment. How can your organization best leverage a power-packed combination— effective managers with engaged employees?

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