

Employee Engagement – A New Language of Humility for Organizations



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Our organizations are often facing the challenge of designing and implementing a method whereby employees feel a sustained sense of engagement with their organization. This effort at classic retention is far more complicated today as our national economy has taken a marked upswing in economic vitality and the career movement process is unfettered for most talented and determined employees. A logical question when employee retention is the topic under discussion is often framed such as "What is the key tool in creating and sustaining employee engagement (aka commitment) to our organization?" The translation of this item inside human resource teams and departments is "How can we be an employer of choice or continue to enhance our attractiveness to both future as well as current members of the workforce.

For decades the adage of 'meaningful work' has resonated within the majority of organizations. Employees and future colleagues seek an alignment to perform using their most appreciated and polished skill sets. When the economic pressure points of a declining economy or world trade markets shift, the ideal nature of a meaningful work match for every employee is deliberately and aggressively set aside for the practical embracing of 'work for the sake of remuneration'.

In today's U. S. economy we have thankfully now seen the marketplace swing to the option for 'meaningful work' and skills alignment once again. The companion trigger that accompanies meaningful work is options for skills expansion and if skills building is achieved, expectations for advancement, preferably within the home organization where skills have been built.

In the October 2014 publication HR NEWS, a key industry publication from our national human resources professional partner organization IPMA-HR, results on employee engagement were reported that included the following conclusions in terms of six leading indicators of employee engagement: a sense of accomplishment in the current assignment; public service with integrity; making a difference through the assignment; exhibiting clearly defined goals and objectives; pride in employment (in the current organization); a feeling of being valued in the assigned role.

These are foundational pieces for future consideration of measurable outcomes in the area of employee engagement. Therefore, the following critical questions emerge as a way in which your internal executive team and designees can build the next levels of engagement strategies within your organization:

1. How is the approach to employee engagement openly communicated through the marketing, recruiting and sourcing efforts within your organisation?
2. How are the above identified communication methods practiced to ensure consistency at every level within the organisation?
3. How is employee engagement embedded within every project management philosophy at every level of the organisation?
4. What locations in the organization/what workforce members hold responsibility for recognition of achievement? Are the competencies necessary for achievement recognition in the organization widely known and equitably applied to all compensation levels?
5. What methods for employee mentoring/coaching/development are applied at every level of the

organization? What methods for continuous evaluation of these workforce development activities are in place? What are the gaps that have been corrected in the most recent annual review of your continuous evaluation process that will be corrected in the next cycle of employee development services?

6. Is your organization's employee engagement commitment an embedded strategic process linked to the business goals of your organization? Do all internal leaders agree with this aligned commitment? If not, why not?
7. What are the anticipated consequences if your organization's guide for employee engagement is not successful? Is this type of failure ultimately fatal for your organization?

Employee engagement is a reframed and mandatory component for every exemplary organization. The single most critical component of internal organizational efforts is continuous measurement against unbiased standards. This requires a long-term commitment by every member of an organization's workforce.