

Ontario Children's Mental Health Summit

Workshop on Enhancing Employee Engagement

26 November 2007

Why Employees Aren't Engaged

- “When you come to work for our organization, you must understand that you are expendable. We don't want to fire you, but we will if we have to. Competition is brutal, so we must redesign the way we work so we can do more with less. We can't guarantee that you will have a job in the future because, after all, escalating competition and stockholder demands create enormous cost pressures on the firm. We're sorry, but that's just the way it is.”
- “Oh, by the way, one more thing. People are our most important asset, and we think you're invaluable. Your devotion to our company and to our customers is the key to our success. We are dependent on you to be innovative, risk-taking, committed to company goals, and a real team player. Hard work and extra-mile effort are what we need from all our employees. OK?”

Employee Engagement

- Every organization wants to engender commitment among employees and reduce voluntary turnover. As a team, identify the three or four key strategies used most commonly in your organization to produce those outcomes. That is, what do you see as the most common strategies to ensure that employees are loyal, committed, and productive?

How Organizations Attract and Retain Talent

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Percent</i>
■ Allow independence on the job	85
■ Encourage a fun-filled workplace	81
■ Provide excellent perks and benefits	60
■ Offer stock options and profit sharing	51
■ Pay high salaries	41

Employee Engagement – Strategy 1

- Provide perks
- Improve work environment
- Increase pay
- Provide financial options
- Offer promotions
- Implement flexible work arrangements
- Fire underperformers

- “I got what I want, so I’ll stay.”

Employee Engagement – Strategy 2

- Create personal development plans
 - Provide stretch opportunities and job challenge
 - Create social networks
 - Coach and mentor
 - Share information & responsibility
 - Make it fun and playful
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- “I am better, or can become better, so I’ll stay.”

The New Work Covenant – Part 1

In this organization, we cannot guarantee that you will have life-long, and maybe not even long-term, employment. We wish we could, but the realities of the modern competitive environment make it impossible. Moreover, you are at risk if the organization is at risk. The organization must thrive for you to thrive. You are also at risk if you are not improving. We expect you to continually improve on your current competency and performance levels. Further, you must add value to the firm and to those with whom you work. Your value must exceed your cost.

The New Work Covenant – Part 2

In turn, while you are employed, you will receive (1) clearly articulated expectations--you'll not fail because you are not clear about what is expected of you; (2) dignity and respect--we will ensure an environment with fairness, honor, and an absence of harassment; (3) opportunities for learning--you will be smarter when you leave here than when you started; (4) skill development and training opportunities--you will be more competent and capable when you leave here than when you started; (5) sufficient resources to do your job--you will not fail because you do not have the needed equipment, space, time, or financial resources; (6) fair pay for performance--it may not be the highest in the industry, but it will be equitable and mutually satisfactory to you and the organization; (7) coaching--you will have models and mentors who will assist you to perform at the highest levels of your potential; (8) honest feedback--you will know how you are doing and how you can improve, and you will have opportunities to express concerns and make suggestions; (9) opportunities for advancement and progression--this may not be hierarchical promotion because there may be no levels in the hierarchy to move up to, but the opportunities will help you grow, expand your talents, and provide satisfaction; (10) continued employability--we will guarantee that if you leave here you will find employment someplace else if you desire it, and that you will be more employable than when you started. We promise you, in other words, that you will receive enough information to allow you to make informed choices, to contribute, to grow, and to plan for your own future. And, at the end of the day, we're even.

Employee Engagement – Strategy 3

- Ensure that some objectives are bigger than the person or the firm.
- Clarify the profound purpose or meaningfulness of the work being done.
- Enable abundance by establishing positive climate, positive communication, and positive connections.
- “I love this. I care deeply about this, so I’ll stay.”

Approaches to Engagement

- **Strategy 1**
 - **Jobs**
 - **Compliance**
 - **Financial Capital**
- **Strategy 2**
 - **Careers**
 - **Commitment**
 - **Social and Intellectual Capital**
- **Strategy 3**
 - **Callings**
 - **Devotion**
 - **Ideological Capital**

SOURCE: Based on Wrzesniewski, 2003; Godfrey, 2005.

Data Feedback – Jobs, Careers, and Callings

Some Ways to Engender Devotion

- Connect to a person or to human benefit
- Connect to an important personal value
- Identify a benefit that extends beyond the immediate
- Connect to the organization's core purpose
- Connect to virtues—e.g., benevolence, compassion, integrity, love, hope
- Connect to the ripple effect (others extend the influence)

Organization Application

- In your team, identify at least one thing that:
 - ... has been done in your organization to enable employee engagement and a sense of calling.
 - ... could be implemented that would improve employee engagement and a sense of calling.
- Add to the listing on the “Strategy 3” slide. Try to ensure that each team member has shared at least two or three ideas.
- Be prepared to report out one or two highest impact ideas generated in your team.