

A Sure Fire Way to Improve Engagement



The negative impact of a passive and disengaged workforce on performance and productivity is substantial, so isn't it time that Leadership gave 'engagement' the commercial attention it deserves?

In 2009 The McLeod Review outlined four key enablers to employee engagement which heralded a new way forward for organisations; yet almost a decade later, engagement levels remain a critical issue for employers across the globe. More worryingly, employee engagement appears to be retracting with around 1 in 4 employees being unable to report that they are moderately engaged, let alone highly engaged.

The difficulty for organisations, however, is finding strategies that can create authentic and sustainable changes to the way they engage with employees.

The McLeod Review outlined some pretty sensible ideas about mechanisms that give employees a stronger voice in the workplace, such as open forums, graffiti walls, committees, and so forth. But, if organisations jump into these solutions without changing how they regard people in their organisations and helping Managers to change their 'ingrained' behaviours, they are unlikely to achieve the results they hope for.

Last year a well-known water management company realised that they needed to change management behaviour in order to encourage growth, and with this commercial interest in clear focus, they embarked on a Notion development programme. The programme, facilitated by an expert Executive Coach, extended over a two month period, consisted of workshops, supervision, peer group practice and access to highly targeted support tools.

At the end of the programme, delegates reported a 300% increase in time spent coaching which also reflected a significant shift away from time spent in 'doing' mode. 100% of delegates rated themselves as 'much more effective' as Managers, and 1 in 8 Managers said that they had resolved their team issues as a result of adopting an 'Enquiry-Led Approach'. One Manager told Notion how they had resolved a delivery issue with a supplier by successfully using their new coaching skills; whilst another Manager reported that their team had started to think outside of the box as a result of more powerful questioning.

Instead of simply cascading management directives, these Managers had learned how to stop, consciously change their state, and engage with their people in a different way. Consequently, people were given the space they needed to grow in confidence, to contribute more effectively, and to take greater ownership of their work.

The outcomes speak volumes. Within eight weeks of the programme, one Manager attributed a 10% growth on sales to engaging with their team differently. Another commented that the programme had had an even wider positive impact on communication and on the general atmosphere within the organisation.

Overall, Managers felt more confident tackling difficult conversations, generating new ideas, gaining commitment from others, and moving forward collaboratively.

One Manager said, "The biggest impact to my department is that...now everybody has a voice and everybody feels like their voice is important."

Whatever the business imperative is, in order increase engagement in organisations, Managers need to learn how to respond differently to employees. They need to turn up the volume by improving levels of enquiry and increasing the frequency and quality of dialogue. When this is achieved, the employee will take centre stage in solution generation and decision making which will ensure that the employee voice is heard loud and clear.

Notion is a global expert in behaviour change. For more information about how our development programmes can help to improve engagement in your organisation, visit us at <https://www.BusinessCoaching.co.uk/services/coaching-culture--coaching-skills> or call us on +44 (0)1926 889 885.

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