



The Human Factor

Releasing the Power of Your People



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Are Your Employees Engaged in their Work?

Gallup's most recent poll of employee engagement indicated that 7 out of every 10 employees are disengaged. The pollsters estimate that this 70% disengagement is costing US businesses \$350,000,000,000 per year. So why are so many people disengaged and what can you do about it?

Looking To Be Engaged

The majority of your employees came in the door on their first day looking to be engaged, in fact, thirsting to be engaged. Granted, some come in with a chip on their shoulder, but the majority wanted to be engaged. Unfortunately the leadership of your organization has allowed them, and in some cases forced them, to become disengaged.

Unfortunately most leadership in today's organizations point their finger at the "Disengaged" employees as the problem and believe that they are the ones who need to change their attitude. True, they may need to change, but the fact of the matter is, somewhere along the way, leadership failed to engage them. Herein lies the real problem. The finger should point back at leadership.

Continued on page three – Employee Engagement



Do Your Employees Have Opportunities to Become Engaged?

Coaching "Generation X"

One of the most fundamental requirements for effective leadership is coaching, and one of the most fundamental requirements of coaching is the ability to understand others' motives, values, and goals, and not forcing one's own on others. Many times, employees don't need a reason to become engaged. What they really need is leadership that gives them the chance to become engaged. Coaching your employees can do just that.

Coaching Generation X employees can be a struggle for many of the Baby Boomers in leadership because they do not

understand nor accept their differences. Generation X are the employees of the workforce today; they are the future. They aren't going away, nor are they likely to conform to the previous generation's definition of work. Boomer managers cannot ignore Xers' differences and try to manage them according to their own mindset. This does not mean agreement with an Xer's attitude, but understanding them to make coaching easier.

Of course, using a generational term such as Generation X is a stereotype, and not everyone fits into it that mold, but there are some generalities that can be of use if you understand them.

Understanding Xer's motivations will better allow you to engage this portion of your workforce.

What Won't Motivate?

Xer's won't do things because they have a deep sense of mission or loyalty to an organization. They have nothing but disdain for corporate politics and bureaucracy and don't trust any institution.

They grew up watching their parents turn into workaholics, only to be downsized and restructured out of their chosen careers. They believe work is a thing you do to have a life (work doesn't define their life).

They have no expectation of job security, so they tend to see every job as temporary and every company as a stepping stone to something better,

Continued on page two – Gen X

Inside This Issue

1. Are Your Employees Engaged in their Work?
2. Coaching "Generation X"
2. How Important are Small Businesses to the U.S. Economy?
3. One Minute Ideas
4. Great Reading!

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Continued from page one – Gen X

or at least to something else. They have been accused of not wanting to pay their dues. But, in today's changing workplace, anyone who is thinking about doing a job long enough to pay dues is out of touch!

However, Xers will work very hard for a job that they believe in, for something that challenges them. Babson College Professor Paul Reynolds found that "10% of Americans between the ages of 25-34 are actively involved in creating a start-up company, a rate about three times as high as any other age group ... it should help dispel once and for all the myth that today's youth are motivationally challenged." (*U.S. News and World Report*)

What Does Motivate?

• Value The Individual and Nurture Relationships

Although there doesn't seem to be one description of Gen X, most will agree that a defining characteristic is that they don't like to be characterized (as we're doing here!). They don't want to be treated as a single entity, but want to be looked at as individuals. In addition, they are the first wave of latchkey kids to hit the work force.

They are homesick for the home they never had. Their focus on relationships over achievement is what leads Boomers to complain about their laziness. But, isn't this strong sense of community and personal relationships in the workplace just what we need?

• Challenging Work

This generation has sometimes been called the MTV Generation because of their short attention span. Xers want new challenges and the opportunity to build new skills. Training is one of the best motivators. They have a tremendous capacity to process lots of information and concentrate on multiple tasks.

They don't want to spend a lot of time talking about things or having meetings. They want to get in, do the work, and move on to the next thing. If you're looking for someone to do the same repetitive task every week, you probably don't want an Xer.

• Freedom to Manage Time and Work

Xers don't want over-your-shoulder, in-your-face managers who constantly check what they're doing. Perhaps as a result of their latchkey childhood, these young workers are not used to being closely

Continued in next column – Gen X

supervised and are remarkably good at working on their own.

• Feedback and Recognition

On the other hand, members of Generation X seem to crave time with their bosses and can never get enough feedback on their performance. They may be searching for what was missing when they were growing up. Because of their short attention span, recognition and rewards must arrive quickly. Employee of the month doesn't do anything for them.



Conclusion

The characteristics for which Generation X has received such bad press are the very qualities that make them valuable. We say we want an empowered work force ... give Xers the ball and they will run with it ... we want a self-directed work force ... these workers have been self directed from a very young age ... we want computer literacy ... Generation X comes out on top ... we want flexible, adaptable workers—right on again.

Xers will respond to Boomer managers if they put meaning into the buzzwords they use so often—empowerment, teamwork, communication. Create an environment where they are challenged by and enjoy their work, where they're measured on performance rather than on which clothes they wear, where they are informed, included, and recognized. Gee, maybe Xers aren't so different from anyone else!

Adapted from The Center for Management and Organization Effectiveness Development Team
Article Source: <http://www.buzzle.com/editorials/11-11-2005-81165.asp>

How Important are Small Businesses to the U.S. Economy?

Small firms –

- Represent 99.7 percent of all employers
- Employ half of all private sector employees
- Pay 44.3 percent of total U.S. private payroll
- Generate 60 to 80 percent of net new jobs annually over the last decade
- Create more than 50 percent of non-farm private gross domestic product (GDP)
- Are employers of 39 percent of high tech workers (such as scientists, engineers, and computer workers)
- Are 53 percent home-based and 3 percent franchises

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration

Continued from page one – *Employee Engagement*

There are several factors that contribute to employee disengagement and each of them can be remedied by following a few basic principles of leadership. The most common elements of disengagement are;

- Allowing Sub-Par Performance to Exist and to Persist
- Motivating your workforce by Fear, Incentive, or Pressure
- Tayloristic Management Philosophies and Practices
- Managing each person as though they all have the same skill sets
- People in jobs that do not utilize their specific talents
- Management's lack of interest in the personal lives of employees
- Lack of Trust
- Lack of Time/Attention from Management
- A Culture of Negativism – Focusing mainly on Failures
- Lack of Clear Purpose or Direction
- Unclear Expectations and Measures of Success
- Little or No Feedback

Basic Principles

People work for a cause, not a company or a manager. They need to know and align with your direction, your cause. Most importantly, they need to know where you're going, how you're going to get there, and who's driving the bus. Then they need to know how what they're being asked to do every day affects that cause, and how they're going to be measured. And finally, they need to know how they are doing.

Assess your company and make sure that you have these in place:

1. A well communicated **Common Purpose** that focuses on the customers you serve.
2. **Clear Roles and Responsibilities** for all levels of the organization.
3. Alignment of your **Operating Processes** and your **Leadership Behavior** with your Common Purpose.
4. **Clear Measures of Success** at all levels of the organization.
5. **A Culture of Accountability** that praises performance and does not allow sub-par performance to exist.

Your success depends on engaging your people. You cannot win without them. Imagine a football team that only had 3 starters on offense who really cared about winning – would you root for them? I think not.

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Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goal.
~ Henry Ford

FREE Software Program: **THE READING LOG**

The Reading Log software program allows you to keep track of all of the books you read and can be used for other tracking applications.

An Affiliate of ours, Gary Sorrell created it to track his son's summer reading and decided to offer it for **FREE**.

The Reading Log is simple and easy-to-use! You'll be up-and-running before you know it.

& Your Kids Will Love IT! [Click Here](#)

Or copy & paste http://newsletterville.com/software/software_solutions.htm into your internet browser to download the software



One Minute Ideas

Web Site of the Month



Using Picasa and Picasa Web Albums together, you can now organize, edit, and upload your photos to the web from your computer in quick, simple steps. Arrange your photos into folders and albums and erase their blemishes using powerful editing tools in Picasa. Then use Picasa Web Albums to share those perfected photos online with family, friends, and the world.

Check it out at

<http://picasa.google.com/>

THE JOKE'S ON YOU by Phil Ryder & YOU



"That depends. If you are pouring it, it's half full. If you are drinking it, it's half empty."

- Tracy Gillespie • Elmira, Ontario, Canada

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The Human Factor

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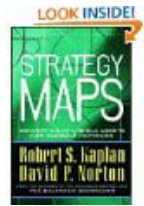


Great Reading!

Here are just some of the books we have found worth our while over the past few months:

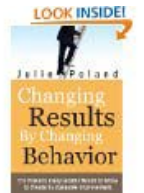
- **Strategy Maps: Converting Intangible Assets into Tangible Outcomes**; Robert Kaplan & David Norton

From the authors of “The Balanced Scorecard.” Kaplan and Norton outline a common sense approach to performance metrics and their integration into the most critical task of management – strategic execution. This book is a must for any leader working toward their goals while navigating today’s choppy whitewater and unknown economic environment.



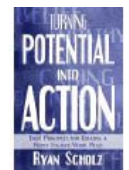
- **Changing Results by Changing Behaviors**; Julie Poland

A dear friend and affiliate of ours, Julie has done a masterful job of creating a step-by-step roadmap to improved results. In a mere 160 pages you have a handbook for change. And let’s face it; change is rampant and ever accelerating. The guidelines here will help you plan your corporate transformation. It will improve your results in the short and long-term, and it will help you sustain a culture of growth and adaptability that today’s marketplace demands.



- **Turning Potential Into Action**; Ryan Scholz

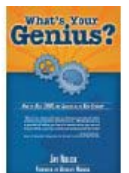
Scholz, in a short 87 pages, has detailed 8 Outstanding Principles for becoming and maintaining Great Leadership within an organization. His guidelines for tapping into the human potential and ultimately the potential of the whole organization are a must read for anyone who desires to release the power of their organization.



- **What’s Your Genius?**; Jay Niblick, David Lombardino, and Jim Caudell

You might call "What's Your Genius?" a how-to book on authenticity and more. In this important new book Jay describes how to raise your level of authenticity and increase your self-awareness, and how these together positively affect your performance as well as your personal happiness, fulfillment and, ultimately, your leadership potential. Discovering your genius and living to it are keys to becoming the authentic leader.

(review by our friend Mark Sturgell)



*In the absence of clearly defined goals, we become strangely loyal to performing daily acts of trivia.
~ Unknown source*

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Engage their Talent by Aligning their
Strategies, People and Processes to
create Loyal Customers for Life.**

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