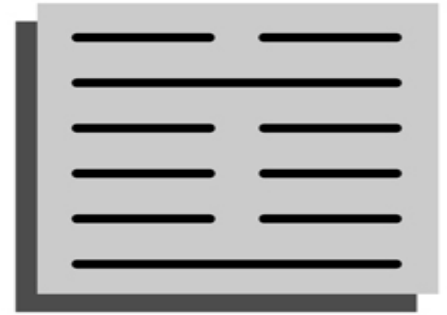


Change Management Associates



April 2014



In Search of the Elusive Associate Engagement

Dear Drew,

A recent Gallup survey found 29% of employees are 'engaged', 52% are 'not engaged', and 19% 'disengaged'. Most every leader with whom I come in contact states a desire to improve 'associate engagement'. So why is engagement so elusive?

First let's define the word. Very basically it is where associates contribute to the success of an organization beyond the norm of simply showing up and performing their 'job'. In these days of ever increasing global competition, and ever demanding customers most organizations recognize the potential benefits of harnessing the full capabilities of all members. How can an organization connect with not just the 'hands' of its associates - their physical abilities - but their 'heads and hearts' - their ideas for improvement of the business?

Consider volunteer organizations. Why would an individual contribute uncompensated time to such organizations? How can that same spirit be translated to for-profit, for-pay organizations? Most importantly such organizations have an inspirational purpose that volunteers share. For-profit, for-pay businesses need to create the same. It is not enough to manufacture a product or deliver a service. The product or service must represent something greater. When I worked at GE in the 1980s the tagline was 'we bring good things to life'. They aren't just cars. Automobiles provide the means for people to 'see the world' and experience the wonderful places life offers, or at least those within driving distance. Google isn't just a search engine. It brings much of the world's information to the fingertips of every person with access to

Upcoming Events



CMA and our network affiliates have the following events scheduled:

AME Events:

**People Centric
Leadership
Fundamentals**

Milford, DE

May 13-15, 2014

Dentsply will host a three-day workshop that covers the key communication skills all leaders need to be successful. [Click here](#) to learn more.

**Leadership
U.S. Naval Academy
Annapolis, MD
June 5, 2014**

This very special event includes a tour of the Naval Academy as well as three presentations from academy leaders. [Click here](#) for more info.

the Internet. Without purpose people will certainly disengage. So, what is your organization's inspirational purpose?

Volunteer organizations also provide a sense of belonging with others who share a passion for the purpose. Abraham Maslow defined a sense of belonging as a basic need of humans. All organizations must provide various means for associates to bond with each other and the organization itself. This can be done in a business and a social environment. Beyond the camaraderie that often is created as people work together on a common objective, deeper bonds come during other interactions sometimes away from the workplace. Volunteer appreciation events, social events and fundraisers and the like serve this purpose quite nicely. For-profit, for-pay organizations need to work hard to create a sense of belonging within all associates. This can be accomplished by providing apparel with company logos, having associates work together on charitable causes outside of work, inviting associate family members to arranged social events, or a combination of a multitude of other possibilities. How does your organization create a sense of belonging?

Next, all organizations need to provide processes for engagement. It is just too important to leave it to each individual to find ways to contribute. Even volunteer organizations can experience disengagement due to a lack of effective processes. If would-be volunteers are unable to contribute in an effective and timely manner, the resulting frustration can lead to said disengagement. This is of particular importance in for-profit, for-pay organizations where associates spend most of their time creating value. Many of the processes that make up the Lean Management System seek to engage team members. Gemba walks, conducting daily 'huddles', ANDON systems, and others can all result in improved engagement if properly practiced. What processes has your organization put in place for engagement?

Finally, we will discuss leadership. Leaders must recognize the value of engagement and provide the time and encouragement for associates to put into practice the aforementioned processes. Further, associates must know that leaders and the organization as a whole care about their well being, Only then can the organization expect people to reciprocate. Such care is demonstrated by an emphasis on safety, the even handed application of fair policies of a company, empathy for the feelings and needs of team members, responsiveness to their problems, providing effective education and instruction to be successful in their jobs, and other ways. To be clear dynamic leadership is not necessary, just consistent, supportive leadership. Does your leadership demonstrate true care for all team members? Do leaders provide opportunities for engagement?

As you consider the four fundamentals for engagement - an inspirational purpose, a strong sense of belonging, the means for engagement, and supportive leadership - do they seem all that difficult? True they take deliberate practice. But most would agree that each falls easily in the realm of possibility. So, can the mystery finally be removed from this subject? Does engagement need to remain so elusive? Is your organization ready to engage?

Lean HR Summit TWI Summit

Nashville, TN
May 7-9, 2014

Two summits, one location. HR professionals come together for the annual HR Summit that addresses the 'People Value Stream'.

Concurrently, TWI, the foundation of Lean, will be the focus of the TWI Summit.

[Click here](#) for information on the HR Summit.

For the TWI Summit, [click here](#).

Lean Enterprise Institute Workshops

Chicago IL

College Park, GA
May 13-16, 2014

Optimizing Flow, Kata, Change Agent Skills, VSM, and more. [Click here](#) for info.

University of Michigan Lean Leadership

Ann Arbor, MI
May 12-15, 2014

Attendees will create Leader Standard Work, Visual Management Systems, initiate A3s and more as they work to fill 'gaps' in their current Lean Management Systems back in their organizations. [Click here](#) for info.

Be sure to check out

Best Regards
Drew Locher
Managing Director, Change Management Associates

Lean Leadership Opportunities Abound!!

A number of Lean Leadership related workshops and programs are being offered this Spring. AME is conducting its 'People Centric Leadership Fundamentals' workshop May 13-15, and a leadership focused event at the Naval Academy on June 5. The University of Michigan is offering a comprehensive leadership program May 12-15. The Lean HR Summit is yet another offering focused on the 'human value stream' May 7-9. Many organizations have already discovered that the successful application of Lean requires more than 'tools'. Consider the 'gaps' in your current lean management system, and how these offerings can help to close them.



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