DAVIS COMPANIES

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
what really works?

hire. build. coach.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT - WHAT WORKS?

Managers everywhere have been talking about one big issue among their teams: engagement levels. A survey conducted by Quantum Workplace showed that engagement dipped to its lowest point in eight years in 2014, with over 440,000 employees reporting 65.9% engagement. Prior to 2014, engagement was lowest in 2010 with 66.7% of employees engaged. Companies whose employees are engaged are more profitable and better-positioned for growth. In fact, in organizations where profits increased, 69% of employees were engaged, compared to 56% of employees at organizations where profits decreased.

The term "employee engagement" has been thrown around interchangeably with "employee satisfaction", however the two are very different elements. Employee satisfaction is a measurement of an employee's happiness with his or her current job. This happiness is measured with satisfaction of vacation time, bonus opportunities and work/life balance. Employee engagement is a measurement of employee's commitment to an organization and his or her future within it. This measurement takes into account the discretionary effort awarded to tasks by employees and if they are willing to go above and beyond the parameters of their job description for their company.

What's the difference?

This mix-up between the two terms begs the question: what does an engaged employee look like versus a satisfied employee? In the survey done by Quantum Workplace, almost half the items related to satisfaction vs. engagement were related to how employers value their employees, whether through compensation, recognition or growth opportunities.

A Satisfied Employee	An Engaged Employee
Content with present career	Content with future role in organization
Comes in at 9am, leaves at 5pm	Often comes in early and leaves late
Does not seem to be motivated to do better	Manager knows what motivates them and is constantly pushing them to do better
Does not completely agree with some of company's values	Agrees with and abides by company's values

In this ebook we'll cover the the **4 steps** you'll need to follow for creating an engaged, passionate team.

HIRE. BUILD. RETAIN. MEASURE.

Engaging people effectively has become one of the biggest differentiators in business – and having an engaged workforce begins with your hiring process. We are in a candidate-controlled marketplace right now. Both passive and active job seekers want to find an employer with a solid reputation for career-specific growth, recognition for performance and a collaborative work environment. So how can your company attract and hire the right employees who will be engaged in your workplace?

The Interview

> **" A resume is going to show you the tactical skills a candidate has, but it's not going to tell you who the person really is. That's when the interview comes in where I look for character, attitude and ability"**
>
> - Brendon Davis, Staffing Executive

During the hiring process, the interview stage is the most crucial piece of determining whether or not a candidate will turn into an engaged employee. The onus is on both parties during this time to express who they truly are and what it will take to succeed.

It's on the interviewer(s) to portray an accurate representation of the company, its culture, the day-to-day tasks of the job and the benefits that come with the position. Don't lie or fluff. Tell people what you are so that in the hiring process, you can weed out those who would not be interested in working in your particular culture. If it works for you and it works for your company, be exactly who you are.

It's the candidate's responsibility to **prove they will be an engaged employee**. They should have a base knowledge of your company, be excited about the interview and paint a clear picture of themselves as a professional. An engaged candidate will ask questions about opportunity for growth within the organization, as well as where the company plans to be 5-10-15 years down the road. This shows forward thinking and their desire to grow with the company.

It is important to keep in mind that not every work environment appeals to every kind of person. A candidate may be perfect for a position on paper, but it is possible that his or her personality and work ethic do not match that of your company. This should not make either party disappointed; each will find a candidate or company that appeals to them and therefore increase engagement levels in their respective workplaces.

Making sure you have found a good fit for your company is important before moving on to the next step: **Building an engaged employee!**

Now that your eager, new employees are ready to start their jobs, it's time to ensure that they have the tools and knowledge necessary to succeed. There are three steps needed to nurture your employees to be passionate, engaged contributors.

1. Career Pathing

Give your employees the blueprint to achieve their goals and the steps they will need to take in order to advance within your organization. Do this before they start. When people come to work with no aspirations or opportunities for advancement, there's no reason for them to be engaged in what they're doing. Use your internal leaders to create career paths that your employees can take, along with what accomplishments they need to achieve in order to pursue the next opportunity.

2. Mentoring

Pair your top performers with your new hires. These are the folks that are engaged in their work and have the tribal knowledge to pass down. A coaching environment gets employees engaged to perform at their highest level on a consistent basis. The best coaches push people to be better than they ever thought they could be. Not only will implementing a mentor system keep your current performers engaged, it will give you a chance to evaluate their management skills for their own career paths.

3. Culture of Performance

Being able to create a competitive yet fun environment makes employees engaged, driven and aware of what they should be accomplishing while trying to climb the ladder. If people don't know what a "good" vs. what a "bad" day at work is performance-wise, there's no frame of reference for them to evaluate how they are doing. Make sure your managers are consistently meeting, evaluating and making recommendations for anyone new coming into your business. Reward and acknowledge the wins on both an individual and company level, and have honest conversations on what needs to be improved.

> **"Fundamentally, companies will need employees to go above and beyond in different ways — not just to engage by working harder, but to engage in ways that show resiliency, learning, adaptability and speed."**
> **- Anon Hewitt 2014 Trends in Global Employee Engagement**

From the start, developing new hires to be engaged in their work will increase their longevity and therefore reduce turnover in your company. **Read more about how to retain engaged employees in the next section!**

It's human nature that once a person gets used to a routine, they tend to become bored or disengaged. The same goes for engagement levels in the workplace. One of the most difficult things that even the best leaders have problems with is how to continuously inspire and motivate employees. At some point the effort may wear off. So how can you combat this cycle and keep your top performers engaged with their work and your organization?

Communication

Communication is key. Everyone is motivated differently and it varies based on generation, experience level and the individual. As managers, it's critical to get to know your employees on a personal level so you can identify the first sign of disengagement. By strengthening the bond of trust, employees are more likely to power through times of disengagement and stay with the organization longer. The relationships between managers and their teams are critical to engagement levels. Sometimes all it takes is one conversation with a manager to turn a disengaged employee around and for them to have a clearer understanding of his or her role in the present and future of the company. When managers can align the personal goals of their team with the overarching goals of the company, engagement levels and employee morale will increase.

Gamification

You can stimulate the competitive nature of your employees and keep them engaged through gamification. Create interdepartmental contests with incentives for performance. When employees are working towards a prize that is not simply professional, they will be motivated to work harder. For example, if a team outing is awarded to the most productive shift on a production floor for the quarter, employees will have a motivator to do their job efficiently and effectively in order to win that prize. Sometimes professional development is not enough to keep an employee engaged for a long period of time. Creating other incentives and providing awards for reaching goals or milestones can make a work environment more amusing, engaging and challenging for your staff.

Team Building

Use certain points in time, projects or initiatives to get people fired up and excited. Doing so will create a team atmosphere that will engage employees beyond the normal day-to-day. When people know that everyone is in the same boat striving towards the same goal, it's hard to NOT be engaged in the task at hand. No one wants to be the weakest link and let the group down. This mindset will create a motivated team of employees willing to be and do their best. This will not only benefit each person professionally, but will benefit the company as a whole.

As important as it is to retain your top employees, it is hard to do so without constructive feedback on how to keep them engaged. Measuring employee engagement is essential in the overall engagement of your staff. **Find out how with the next step!**

Taking the steps to hire, build and retain your workforce will mean nothing without regularly measuring the engagement levels of your employees. First and foremost, you need to make sure that your managers understand how to motivate, inspire and engage their own team. There are several cost-effective ways to keep tabs on the engagement of individuals, as well as teams or departments.

The Open Door Policy

Maintaining a direct relationship between managers and employees with an open door policy is the easiest way to measure whether or not a person is engaged with what he or she is doing. Managers need to not only be open to hearing feedback, but welcome it and know how and when to relay information up the ladder. Companies should be constantly measuring and monitoring engagement levels. A more engaged employee is going to positively affect customer experience.

"An open door policy means that someone can come in and say, "Look I'm not happy in my position. How can I change it?" And that's not a bad thing. That means that you've created a culture that encourages open communication."

- Ryan Clutterbuck, Staffing Executive

Individual Performance Metrics

Constantly measure how your employees are performing, set benchmarks and then extend those benchmarks. In sales, for example, is a person consistently hitting the number of outbound calls that he or she should make? Establishing individual key performance indicators allows everyone to help the company grow and raise the bar in different areas. Measuring the ebbs and flows of performance metrics is a great indicator as to how engaged a person and/or team is with their work, their manager and their department.

Anonymous Electronic Surveys

Another great way to get feedback is through anonymous electronic surveys. Some people are not comfortable speaking out when they have an issue or a concern, so surveys give them an outlet where their opinion can be heard by management. Surveys are also good for benchmarking differences between demographics in the organization and whether engagement levels change over time.

Regardless of your business model, it is essential that you are able to **hire** employees who fit into your company culture, **build** on those employees to be engaged in their work and the future of the organization, **retain** high performing employees who understand their role in the company, **measure** engagement levels and take necessary action to improve employee morale.

With engagement levels lower than the previous eight years, it is important for companies to begin changing their practices. Starting with the hiring process will greatly benefit your organization. At The DAVIS Companies, we make our "work hard, play hard" culture known before the hiring process even starts, to make it clear what we expect from our employees. We use gamification in order to create a fun and competitive environment between co-workers and we have monthly meetings with managers to ensure that everyone's voice is being heard.

To speak to a Certified Staffing Professional about your hiring needs or receive free Customized Labor Stats for your hardest-to-fill positions email **staffing@daviscos.com**.

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Subject Matter Expert Interviews:
Brendon Davis, Staffing Executive
Ryan Clutterbuck, Staffing Executive
Mark Agostinelli, Staffing Executive

About The DAVIS Companies:

The DAVIS Companies is a preferred source for Staffing Solutions and Talent Advisory Services, specializing in contract, contract-to-hire and direct hire staffing for Engineering, Skilled Manufacturing and Software personnel. With corporate headquarters in Marlborough, MA and offices in New Hampshire, New Jersey, Minnesota and Georgia, we put great people to work in great companies.

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