

KEEPING TOP TALENT ENGAGED AND LOYAL

Lori McKaig's Speaking Points

Attributes of Engaged Employees

1. Positive attitude toward the organization.
2. Demonstrates a desire to stay with the company.
3. Thinks creatively and spontaneously about how they can increase the organization's success – doesn't wait to be told to do things.

Measuring Employee Engagement is not new to Accenture...but we've changed how we approach it over the years.

I. Background – Old Way of Measuring

1. Measured satisfaction with work and with company
2. Calculated the results as an average across different types of questions and issues

Problem 1: High scores might not really be a true reading

Example: Employee is satisfied with 60 of 65 dimensions. One might assume that the employee was satisfied and engaged, but what if the five areas where he/she was not satisfied were the most important indicators?

Problem 2: Questions changed through the years, making it difficult to benchmark

Problem 3: Questions lacked linkage to business results – survey could not tell us how committed employees were to driving better company performance. We lacked information about the “drivers” of employee satisfaction – only measured whether there was satisfaction or not.

II. Six Drivers of Higher Engagement Levels

1. People with Whom Employees Work

- Levers: executives, managers, coworkers, contractors, clients, vendors
- Are my employees treated with dignity and respect?
- Do my employees get to interact with more senior mentors?
- Are interactions with co-workers collegial?
- Are people treated like adults?

2. Work They Do

- Levers: activities, responsibilities, authority levels and autonomy, knowledge exchange, technology they get to use to do their work, resources at their disposal to do their work
- Is the work challenging but not overly frustrating over periods of time?
- Does the work combine aspects of both long and short term accomplishment?
- Are there opportunities for my people to stretch and grow?
- Can employees see evidence that they are making a difference?

3. Development Opportunities

- Levers: career framework, succession planning, opportunity for promotion, training opportunities, external professional affiliations
- Is the next step clearly articulated? As well as the criteria?
- Are employees given learning and development opportunities?

4. Rewards & Recognition

- Levers: fair pay, profit sharing, option grants, employer 401k match – Does the benefit package address employees' everyday concerns?
- Are criteria by which employees are compensated understood by employees?
- Do employees receive adequate recognition from superiors and peers?

5. The Company Itself

- Levers: reputation, values, processes/policies
- Are actions aligned with values?
- Can employees be proud of the company?

6. Work Environment

- Levers: work/life balance, travel flexibility, alternative work arrangements, cultural flexibility
- Physical work environment/safety – employees spend a third to half of their day at work – is it a pleasant place to be?

- III. Modified our approach to improve our understanding of employee engagement levels – instituted two years ago
 - 1. Survey and measure our employees' level of commitment and belonging to shared goals and helping the company achieve and maintain its status as a high-performance business.

Accenture's Multi-level Approach to Understanding and Improving Employee Engagement

- I. Global Survey
 - a. 75 questions, organized by the six major categories of engagement drivers
 - b. Captures comments
 - c. Approximate 75% response rate
 - d. Engagement scores have risen by >10 points over past two years
- II. People Trend Surveys
 - a. Sent to 10% of employee population per month
 - b. Short surveys focusing on a subset of drivers and issues highlighted in global survey.
 - c. Helps measure how effective we are in delivering on our career promises to our people.
- III. Team Surveys – teams have issues distinct to themselves, that may not be captured in global survey.
 - a. Subset of global survey questions and two additional questions to track factors such as team morale.
 - b. Effective way to measure the effectiveness of the actions taken in response to the global survey.
 - c. Goal: Encourage better communication between team leadership and team members.
- IV. Team Site Visits
 - a. Focus group sessions with team members conducted by HR professionals as a kind of "People QA Review" not unlike a customer QA review.

- b. Involve structured discussions around questions that focus on some of the key engagement drivers.
 - c. Create an expectation of change by employees, so sponsorship by team leadership is key.
 - d. HR works with leadership to identify actions to address issues identified.
 - e. Results of site visit are communicated to the employees by team leadership.
- V. Personal Engagement List
- a. Employees rank the six engagement dimensions in terms of how important they are to the employee.
 - b. The employees assign a satisfaction score to each of the six dimensions.
 - c. Tools for discussion with employee's career counselor or supervisor – identify areas that require change and what can be done about those areas.
 - *Employees who use the personal engagement list during annual review discussions with their supervisor are twice as likely to rate their annual review experience as “excellent.” - Accenture Study*
- VI. Training for Managers and Executives – help them understand engagement scores and actions they can take to achieve the most impact on their people's engagement.
- VII. Website open to all employees with best practices to address engagement issues.
- VIII. Sponsorship from the top down – all executives measured on the improvement of their employee engagement scores and get 360° feedback on leadership traits.

By improving employee engagement, we improve our financial result...

- We save money because we reduce recruiting costs and lost revenue from attrition.
- We improve the service to our clients, because we have retained experienced, knowledgeable and engaged professionals.

What can small companies do to understand, maintain or improve employee engagement?

- I. Competitive benefit program is a given...need to satisfy the physical needs first, but it's not enough...
- II. Good Communication

III. Treating people like the adults and professionals they are.

- a. Can't over-communicate, especially around the companies goals and vision and making sure each employee knows how they contribute to the success of the organization.
- b. Open door – easy access to executives, senior mentors, etc.
- c. Written, broad communication should be personalized – put yourselves in the shoes to the recipient – insist that others in your company who are responsible for broad communications do the same.

d. ASK EMPLOYEES WHAT THEY THINK

- Gestalt's Annual Survey: Open-ended questions
- Takes longer to analyze, but you don't misinterpret what is important to employees or assume employee satisfaction is great based upon an "average" score.
- Sample Questions:
 1. What do you like most about your job?
 2. What corporate goals do you think your work supports?
 3. What excites you about the company?
 4. What things should the company continue to do?
 5. What things do you think the company should stop doing?
 6. If you could change something about your job what would it be?
 7. How do you feel about your ability to access anyone in the company to express your ideas?
 8. How do you feel about the company's support and tools to do your work?
 9. Would you recommend or not recommend the company to others as a place of employment, and why?
 10. What do you think is the most important thing the company can do to assure we have low attrition rates?
 11. What forms of company communication do you feel are best to keep you informed?
 12. Client focused questions

- Must get good percentage participation – there is a tendency for folks who are very happy or very unhappy to respond, more so than those in the middle, so must get a good size sampling.
- After the survey, provide employees with results. The fastest way to get employee to ignore the next survey, is to withhold results, do nothing, not communicate, etc.
- Tell employees what you plan to do – or have done – in response to what you heard.
- Tell employees what you can't do and most importantly why.
- Give employees as much autonomy in their jobs as you can. Most high performing organizations are comprised of people who like a level of creativity in their job – they don't want to be told every step of the way what to do. You are paying people competitive salaries...let them bring their ideas, skills and talents to their jobs.