

How to Get Engaged at Work

We all want to feel inspired to grow and succeed, both personally and professionally. Engagement is often the term used to describe this level of commitment. Engagement describes the allegiance a person feels towards a particular goal, career or organisation. Employee engagement is a popular concept in business these days. Most organisations recognise that increased employee engagement provides an instrumental advantage to business success through increased productivity and retention rates. So, how do you harness your commitment in order to become more engaged in your work and life?

Commitment represents an overall internal attitude and is crucial to achievement. Sometimes people substitute motivation for commitment, but the two are actually very different. As distinct from motivation which can be internally or externally generated, your level of commitment to a goal is dependent on one key internally driven factor: Your understanding of the significance and meaning that the goal provides to your life and / or the lives of others.

Your personal commitment to any undertaking signifies what you are prepared to do, change or sacrifice, in order to achieve your goal. Engagement results from understanding the value this goal will provide to your life, the lives of others or the world. Making this connection allows a person to harness the long standing commitment required to continue to work towards the goal at hand with enthusiasm and determination.

In order to understand the significance that your work goals provide to your life or the lives of others, you need to recognise the importance of your job. Every single person in every organisation makes a contribution to the bigger picture. It is vital that your contribution is linked to your personal set of values.

So, how do we get to the deepest understanding of our values? In practical terms, this involves drilling down from the goal you are aiming for, and asking "why" achieving that goal is important to you. Once you have answered that question, ask yourself why the answer you have given yourself is important to you. Drill down until you really identify why that goal is important to you. For instance, if you are aiming for a promotion, ask yourself why. The answer will vary depending on what you value.

It may be more money, or status, or challenge. If your answer is more money, why? Are you driven by financial freedom, the need for possessions, or keeping up with the Jones's? In turn, why is that important to you? Keep going until you get to the true meaning of your goal for you. Identifying the real meaning behind your goal allows you to ask yourself if your goal matches what you actually value in life. If the answer is yes, you will be truly committed to your goal.

Identifying your values and being true to them is one aspect of engagement. Another is ensuring you are always playing to your strengths. It's still common in organisations to focus on improving weaknesses in their employees. Yet, we have all reached our current level of success due to our strengths. It's well proven that a focus on identifying, utilising and maximising strengths leads to greater fulfilment and, in turn, success.

How do you identify your strengths? Construct a list of as many personality attributes as you can. Include qualities such as communication skills, empathy, patience, confidence, flexibility, leadership, kindness, efficiency, organisation skills, analytical skills, discipline etc. You may like to get some assistance from friends or colleagues to construct your general list. You should be able to identify thirty or more different attributes. Once your general list is complete, identify the top five or six strengths that you believe describe you most accurately. Ensure you consider every strength on your general list during the process of identifying your true strengths. It may be that you have always thought you have certain strengths, which could minimise the opportunity to discover what your true

strengths are. Once you have identified your strengths, ensure that you can recognise circumstances in which you have utilised these strengths, to verify that they are actually your key qualities. Discussing this with an objective third party may help your verification process. Identifying your values and your strengths will allow you to direct your professional and personal goals towards areas of meaning, inspiration and enjoyment. Understanding that you have the ability to creatively bring this meaning, inspiration and enjoyment into your current role will give you a new perspective on your current job and an expansive outlook on your future career. Whether you are the manager of yourself, or the manager of yourself and others, you will discover that increased engagement is an instrumental factor to success, not only in terms of productivity and retention, but also fulfilment, achievement and growth. 💡

© Successful Minds – March 2009



e: info@successfulminds.com.au
w: www.successfulminds.com.au