



Brand and Culture Alignment Toolkit®

ALIGN AND INSPIRE

Higher Employee Engagement

The needles that moves all the needles.

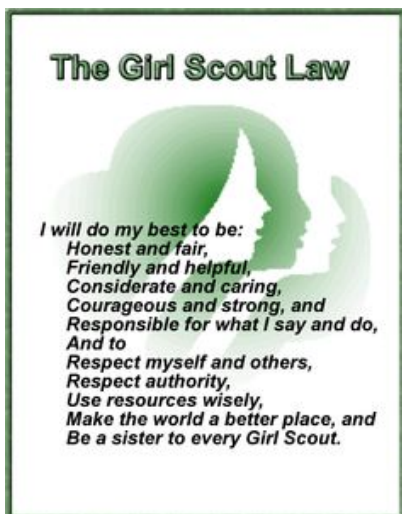


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Higher Employee Engagement moves all the needles!

I find it to be mind boggling that every consulting company who thinks they know what they're talking about will write an article or a blog or a post about employee engagement. By now most people are tired of hearing the bullshit and figure that most of it is just rhetoric it's just nonsense.

If I read one more article about the top 10 or the top five ways to get your employees engaged in their work, I just may vomit. Somewhere in the article or blog post there is reference to communication and the importance of it in the workplace. And then there are the core values or better put, the platitudes that most organizations spew that everyone is supposed to get behind. Does this sound familiar to you? We are honest, we have integrity, we are trustworthy, we treat our customers and our employees with respect and dignity, we get things done on time and on budget! What a bunch of horseshit! You couldn't tell the difference between a company with core values like these if your life depended on it. We like to put it this way, those core values could be part of how seal team six operates or how the Girl Scouts of America operate! No difference.



So, how do you engage employees in their work? One thing is for certain, you cannot BS people into thinking they work for a great company. How many companies try to get their employees to work 100 hours a week and then offer up a happy hour or some other perk in the office that gets everyone excited for about an hour or two and then diminishes when they go back to their desks and begin their tasks again. Engagement is a funny thing. It involves really caring about the people on your team and getting everyone to align behind a specific purpose that makes sense to everyone in the organization. It's about understanding what drives and motivates people that makes them feel included and how they could serve a higher purpose in the organization. It's not about the money! And it's more than giving a crap! Breaking down silos, eliminating passive aggressive behavior, working together in a more collaborative way, are all part of getting human beings to engage in their work.





Until now, no one has ever told you how to do it! And much of the reason for that is because they don't know how to do it. They can certainly talk about it and write about it and give speeches about it, but no one has a formula to change employee engagement until now.

Have you ever heard the expression connecting the head with the heart is the only way you can get someone motivated to do something they love? So that means we must tug on the emotional heartstrings of people in an organization as well as the intellectual side of their mental stimulation. That means there is a fair amount of science behind how we do this. It's not just about the feel good kumbaya, let's sit around the campfire and hold hands shit that we've been listening to for the last 40 years.

Businesses cannot do things that they've done for the last 40 years and expect people in 2021 to react the same way they did in 1980. It's insulting to think that they wouldn't evolve and try to build an experience in their organization based on today's science, knowledge and skill set.

So here is how we begin the process; visualize your entire organization as though it were a single person, doing its best work on its best day to achieve all its promises and accomplish all its goals. What would that person be like? How do we personify this entity? We use a four-factor model of behavior that typifies the personality of an individual and turns it into a virtual person that everyone in the organization can aspire to be like. Our four factors are the following: innovation or creator, harmony or caretaker, precision or expert, and resolve or drivers.

There are specific attributes for each type of personality, such as a caretaker may follow the rules, treat everyone with empathy and understanding and so on. An expert may pay very close attention to detail and analytics, see a project through to completion and try to eliminate mistakes of any kind.

Once we have everyone's input in describing this virtual person, we calculate the responses, they are then plotted on our quadrant chart that mimics the four-factor model as well as the frontal cortex of the human brain. It's a little more complicated than that, but you get the idea. Once we have all the responses plotted, we average out where the collective responses land on the chart. We follow that up by conducting a consensus role target meeting to determine where the organization aspires to be in the future. This process engages the participants along the way. Believe me, you can do this.

When we collectively determine where we aspire to be as an organization, behavioral attributes begin to emerge and the process of building 7-10 "aligned inspirations or organizational commandments" take shape. In other words, who are we when we are doing our best work on our best day and how do we behave, or as my friend, Ed Wallace puts it, how do we show "worthy intent"?

Finally, we speak with everyone in the organization about the 2-3 behavioral changes they can make each day to become more like the “role target” we all aspire to be like. Again, worthy intent.

We learn by observing the behavior of others and it becomes contagious to the point where people feed off the positivity of one another. Our group becomes better and we become better.



Exercises;

1: The “FTF” Metric

Think about a job you’ve had or a role you’ve played that had you so excited that you couldn’t wait to get out of bed in the morning and straight to work. A job where your “FTF” – “Feet to the Floor” time – was measured in seconds rather than minutes or hours.

Write down the emotions you felt doing that job. Not the things you did, but the feelings you experienced as you did them. What about those feelings motivated you?

Extra Credit: do the same, but this time for a job or role that didn’t excite you, or maybe even actually bored or discouraged you? Was it the work that got you down? Or was it something about your “workplace” – your colleagues/ managers, the policies and procedures, the way people treated each other?

Exercises;

#2: Motivators

Draw a line vertically down a sheet of paper making two columns. In the left column, write down all the things about your work that motivate you, and in the right column list all the things that de-motivate you.

Which list is longer?

Of the list on the right, check the things that you can DO something about and, underneath, write your plan down and give yourself a deadline.