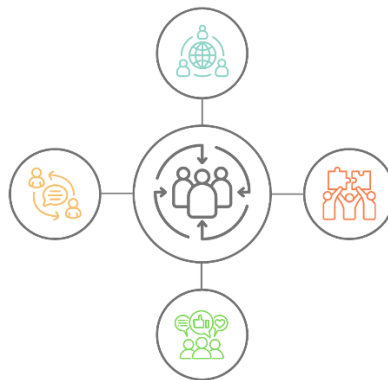


Employee engagement...

...it's all you need to know

Why does Employee Engagement matter? In 2009, the UK government commissioned research into the correlation between this and successful organisations. The subsequent report: “Engaging for Success¹”, highlighted how employee engagement can lead to improved business performance indicators across a range of organisations. It also identified that employee engagement can lead to a sense of satisfaction and meaning in work, and the opportunity to develop and use personal skills.

And before you start thinking, “yeah – but where do we start?”, the good news is that the authors established that there are just **four enablers** to employee engagement. These pillars provide a strong framework that organisations can use as a backdrop when developing their employee engagement strategy. They describe these enablers as follows:



Strategic narrative: a strong, authentic and compelling story about the business in terms of its history, where it is now, and where it wants to be; told in a way that involves everyone in the business. There should be a clear sense of direction that has been driven by external considerations, and this needs to be conveyed consistently by visible leaders in the organisation who empower their staff and teams. Organisations that do this well recognise the power of effective communications, and understand how an absence of information can create speculation, rumour and dissent.



Engaging Leaders: a truly engaging manager provides clear objectives for the teams with guidelines on their expectations, without “over-managing” individuals. They will provide regular feedback on their performance, and have open and supporting conversations to discuss the effectiveness of their behaviours in the workplace. They will encourage individuals to develop their skills and experience and help provide opportunities for them to improve their performance. They will celebrate achievements and share success with their teams helping to create an open and constructive environment in which to work.

¹ MacLeod, D. and Clarke, N. (2009) Engaging for Success: Enhancing Performance through Employee Engagement. Office of Public Sector Information, London.



Employee voice: this implies that everyone has the opportunity to be heard and *listened to*, so there must be opportunities and mechanisms in place across the business for this to happen. These should also accommodate the different preferences that individual personalities have in the way in which they communicate. Organisations that are particularly successful in raising levels of employee engagement include their teams as part of their continuous improvement agenda, or seek their input in addressing problems across the business. Staff feel valued when their views and opinions are seen to be taken into account.



Organisational integrity: in what way is the organisation seen to “behave”? Is there congruence between what the company and its leaders say will happen, and what it actually delivers? Key words and phrases to help pinpoint this intangible aspect include: trust; consistency; shared values and positive behaviours. Creating a rewarding and blame free culture is a strong feature of organisational integrity; as well as nurturing and rewarding behaviours which are consistent with organisational values. Expectations of behaviours towards the job; each other; and those outside the business are clearly communicated, and performance against these behaviours is monitored; rewarded and celebrated where appropriate; managed and developed where necessary – and at *all* levels across the business.

Using these enablers as a framework, **Tallant Jones** can provide you with all the support you need to engage successfully with your staff and have a positive impact on your organisational effectiveness. We offer a range of programmes, coaching frameworks and team sessions to help develop and embed a truly engaged environment in your business.

In the meantime, here are some simple and effective ways that you can make a difference right now across your organisation:

Quick wins:



Visibility make your leader(s) known and visible to all staff. Provide opportunities to interact over pizza lunches or continental breakfasts; blog or vlog; walk the floor; open your door for an hour a week. Tell people in advance; do it spontaneously; – just make sure you do *something*.



Write the story: let people know the organisation’s journey – the highs and the lows; bring it up to date and share the vision for the future. What’s the story of the past, present and future? Show how *everyone* plays a part in the success of the and keep it brief and succinct.



Communicate: regularly, consistently, and in all directions. Have meetings to disseminate company information; hold discussions to address issues; find out what matters; keep in touch with staff; and provide feedback on their performance and behaviours. Give staff the opportunity to communicate with their peers in different areas of the business, and to share their experiences with one another.



Just ask: find out what you need to know. Undertake surveys; provide regular feedback forums; drop in on team meetings – and act on what you learn. Ask again, and tell people what you did based on what they wanted – share what worked, and what didn't.

Notes about the author:

Lizz Jones is an expert on Employee Engagement and provides consultancy and support for organisations and departments to help them to unlock the potential that positive staff engagement can bring. She has helped businesses, Universities and NHS Trusts to adapt the same principles within their organisations and offers a range of interventions in Organisational Culture, Leadership Behaviours and Team Dynamics including masterclasses, team coaching, facilitated events and individual coaching and mentoring. To learn more, contact Lizz direct at lizz@tallantjones.co.uk or visit our website www.tallantjones.co.uk