

Introduction

Given the link between engaged employees and business outcomes, commitment to a transformational approach to employee engagement will give you solid, sustainable results. This approach is supported by five attributes that are fundamental to attain and sustain a culture of engagement

Credit:

<http://www.providermagazine.com/reports/Documents/2016/Align-web.pdf>

Attribute: CLEAR SENSE OF PURPOSE

Provides a compelling picture and clear line of sight to what matters most in the organization. Employees can clearly see where the organization has come from and where it is going. They recognize how their role impacts results and how their work contributes to advancing organizational goals. Communication from leaders is consistent and evokes a sense of ownership and passion. Compared to other industries, long-term and post-acute care organizations have an advantage. In retail, the mission is to sell more stuff. In manufacturing, it's about efficiently producing widgets. In our world, we are improving the quality of life for vulnerable human beings. This is an opportunity to speak from the heart in language that resonates with staff..

Attribute: PEOPLE-FOCUSED MANAGERS

The old saying "People don't leave jobs, they leave managers" is true. According to Gallup's "State of the American Manager," the role of the manager has the most significant impact on employee engagement, citing that managers account for 70% of the variance across business units. Engagement largely comes down to whether people have a manager who cares about them, grows them and appreciates them. The key message is: Invest in your managers! Continually develop and optimize their coaching skills.

Attribute: ACTIVE VOICE OF EMPLOYEE

This attribute requires the organization to have mechanisms in place that enable employees to express ideas, share concerns and provide input on improvement opportunities. These mechanisms may include employee forums, surveys, focus groups, and suggestion input to name a few. The true test of the presence of an active employee voice is when employees feel that their voice is heard and their feedback is taken into account when decisions are made.

Attribute: MEANINGFUL CONNECTEDNESS

A meaningful connection with other people is a core human need. When the workplace supports a sense of belonging and strong social connections, individuals are more trusting and cooperative with each other. This feeling of camaraderie creates a common sense of purpose, group loyalty, and the sense that "we're all in this together." Productivity increases and employees tend to feel more passionate about their work and less likely to quit their jobs!

Attribute: VISIBLE INTEGRITY

This attribute simply means that organizational values are reflected in day-to-day behavior. People share information, maintain an open mind, deal with conflict directly and follow-through on promises. Organizational integrity must be role modeled by senior leaders and managers.

Measure what matters

The transformational approach is fortified when an engagement metric is included as one of your key performance indicators. It's important to measure what matters. A valid, reliable engagement survey provides you with a quantifiable gauge to monitor engagement and gives employees an opportunity to give their feedback on the company, their job and their manager. This assessment should utilize verified questions that relate to proven engagement elements and offer space for employees to comment on these factors.. Survey results should be segmented into various groups so you can analyze data by job category, generation and length of service. In addition to a quantitative summary of the ratings, the narrative comments provide important insights to employee perspectives, and a deeper level of understanding about gaps and opportunities. Comments should be incorporated into your report so you can efficiently glean valuable, actionable information.

Conclusion

While employee engagement is a relatively simple concept, building and sustaining an engaged workforce seems to elude many organizations. If leaders don't own and integrate employee engagement as a core business strategy, engagement efforts become an uncoordinated bunch of activities. Leadership commitment starts by embracing the five cultural attributes of engagement, and is sustained by continuously measuring, monitoring and improving your engagement culture.