

7 Tips on How Coaching Helps Boost Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is an issue of major concern for most organisations as the price of ambivalence or worse, disengagement in the work place can indeed be very costly. Employees are engaged when they have a sense of commitment to the company regarding it as a great place to work, when they willingly go the extra mile and put in the discretionary effort, and when they don't want to work anywhere else.

According to global human resources management and outsourcing firm **Hewitt**, engagement is the extent to which an organisation has captured the 'hearts and minds' of its people and is made of three key behaviours – Say, Stay and Strive.

Coaching makes a key contribution towards employee engagement in the following ways:

1) Increased self-awareness

Coaching helps managers and leaders grow their levels of self and "other" awareness as they take time to reflect and think deeply about their intentions, behaviour and outcomes. It helps them gain clarity about themselves including, who they are – their strengths, weaknesses, blind spots and what drives them – their sense of meaning and purpose, values, personal vision, motivators and goals. This awareness helps make a strong connection between who they are, what they do and why they do it resulting in greater emotional engagement.

2) Better alignment

With greater self-knowledge the leader is able to create better alignment and congruency between their values, goals and aspirations and that of the organisation. This leads to renewed energy in their levels of commitment and purposeful action. The sense of belonging and community, effective teamwork and

collaboration all get impacted positively.

3) Leader as coach

As managers and leaders gain value and appreciate the insights derived from engaging in their own coaching and reflective practices and translating these into positive actions, they also become better “leaders as coaches” with their direct reports. They became enablers of others to do the same, harnessing their capabilities for best results. Employees, in turn, become more engaged as they value the sense of “my boss cares about me and is interested in my development” and “I am a valuable, contributing member here.”

4) Executive EQ

Competencies like empathy, listening, collaboration, teamwork, influence, leveraging diversity, conflict resolution and having courageous conversations all help provide the glue that facilitates greater teamwork and emotional engagement to achieve mutual goals. The manager is role modeling through her daily behaviour the key values that fundamental to their organization and its brand. They start “walking their talk” more consciously.

5) The “flow on ” effects

In working with a senior executive who was technically extremely bright but not as adapt in the EQ stakes and getting the best out of his team, after 15 months of coaching we achieved some significant results. Not only had his employee engagement scores improved significantly but his entire team of 12 direct reports had also lifted their engagement (and performance) ranging from 5 to 35 points, as measured by a reputable external engagement survey.

6) Leaders set the culture

The above example reinforces the leader’s role in creating the culture through his everyday leadership behaviour. The executive was able to quickly discern what he was doing well as well as noting the critical engagement behaviours he had been oblivion to! As a

result of coaching he became much more aware about the “small things” which made a big difference to his people and customers energy and engagement.

7) From work to life engagement

Coaching typically takes the “whole person” into account. The benefits derived from coaching such as increased engagement at work doesn't stop there but spills over into the individuals home life as well. There is a shift from just “work/employee engagement” to “life engagement.” The person becomes engaged and energised with the whole of life.

High tech and high touch engages!

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