

The Savvy Leader's Guide to Successful Employee Engagement

In 8 Easy Steps



So you recognize that you're having trouble engaging your employees.



Maybe they're falling asleep on the job.

(Or they may as well be)



Wouldn't it be nice to have employees who actually contribute to your continuous improvement efforts?

After all,

High levels of employee engagement can boost revenue by 2.5x.

Engaged and enabled employees are 50% more likely to outperform expectations.

Companies with engaged employees outperform those without by 202%

88% of engaged employees understand how their contribution relates to business goals



Engaged employees make you more money, do better work, and contribute to your business goals.



**So, what can
you do?**

First, you need to understand the difference between engagement and satisfaction.

A satisfied employee may like their job very much and have no intention to leave it, but do only what is necessary to keep it. That doesn't sound so great, right? Satisfied employees may be pretty common,

but they're a far cry from what you really want in employees. What you really want are engaged employees. Why? They go beyond what is simply required for the job, expending energy to solve problems, delight customers and reach company goals. And the best part? They do it because they WANT to.

**Convert your employees from being SATISFIED to
being ENGAGED.**

Creating an emotional connection to the work is at the heart of taking employees from simply being satisfied to being engaged.




Ask For Input

There are people in your organization who know how to solve important problems, improve customer satisfaction, and eliminate waste. But most people won't tell you their ideas if you don't ask! The people on the front line who are doing the work are the most equipped to improve the work. By encourage your staff to share their ideas for improvement, you'll find that they come up with things that never would have occurred to leadership.

As James Surowiecki wrote, "...much of what we've seen so far suggests that a large group of diverse individuals will come up with better and more robust forecasts and make more intelligent decisions than even the most skilled decision maker."

When Xerox embarked on their journey toward carbon neutrality they asked employees how to make the company more green; the employees were in the best position to find opportunities for better environmental outcomes and cost savings. This strategy saved them \$10.2 million, and eliminated 2.6 million pounds of waste.



Xerox saved \$10.2
million with this
strategy!



Share Your Vision

Employees consistently rank understanding the company's mission and strategic goals as critical drivers of engagement. This is because when the core values and vision are well understood, decision making becomes easier at every level, and employees gain confidence in their own ability to advance the business.

After all - you're more likely to want to get involved and contribute to continuous improvement when you know you're doing the right thing!

The most engaged employees understand the strategy that is driving the business. They have insight into the immediate and longer term goals and key objectives. They also understand how their work is aligned with the overall strategy.

88% of engaged employees understand how their contribution relates to business goals



Empower Action

Perhaps the most powerful of these employee engagement ideas is to empower employees to act on their ideas. By giving the person who came up with the opportunity for improvement the time and tools necessary to implement the idea, you ensure that the person most invested in the success of the idea is following through on it, AND that your own work load doesn't increase with each new idea. To do this,

- Remove unnecessary processes or policies that prevent employees from solving problems on their own
- Make necessary resources available to act on the best employee ideas.

Often employees have ideas that can be useful to parts of the business outside their specific role. Give them the opportunity to provide constructive comments and suggestions, even when they aren't directly working on a particular problem..

Encourage Cross-Functional Collaboration!

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Be Transparent

Remember, employee engagement requires an emotional connection that makes employees want to go above and beyond. This type of environment is based on a positive, trusting relationship between employees and leadership. Of course, this isn't possible if decisions are made behind closed doors and leaders withhold information from their employees. Trust is built through transparency and candor, and is a critical element in a culture of continuous improvement. The most engaged employees report having a clear picture of the strategic direction of the company and trust in its leadership.

Employees who feel like they are walled off from senior leadership or other areas of the company are likely to become disengaged. Giving every person a window into the initiatives that are making the company better helps to keep them actively involved.



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Gratefully Acknowledge Effort

You've probably recognized that in your personal life, recognizing and rewarding the efforts of others makes it more likely that they'll repeat the behavior. It turns out, this applies at work, too!



Every employee engagement strategy should include a program for employee recognition.

That recognition doesn't have to be financial; in fact, it really shouldn't be. It should, however, be sincere and timely. A thank you, handshake, note, or public acknowledgement lets people know that you're aware of the effort they contributed, and that little bit of gratitude goes a long way toward encouraging future engagement - from those individuals, and from others too.

So, make sure you don't get too caught up in the day-to-day activities of your own job to recognize and reward your employees for the work they do.



Provide Feedback

Did you know that lack of feedback from managers is often listed among the top reasons employees leave their jobs? That makes neglecting to provide that feedback a very costly oversight! According to the Bureau of National Affairs, employee turnover costs companies \$11 billion annually. The cost of turning over an employee is approximately 21% of that employee's salary.

So how do you provide the feedback necessary to keep your staff around?

- Provide clear outlines of your expectations, so your staff aren't forced to guess what you're looking for
- Acknowledge and reward employees who meet those expectations
- Provide course corrective action for those who lag behind
- Frequency and consistency is key; don't let feedback drop off your radar.



Share Results

Employee engagement rates skyrocket when there is a clear correlation between employee action and company success. When your staff are working hard trying to improve the business, show them the impact of their efforts!

Sharing the impact that was a direct result from engagement results in:

- Continued (and enthusiastic!) engagement from those who initially impacted the company's performance
- More widespread engagement from others who realize the impact of their peers and want to get involved
- More ideas being put forward and implemented, making your organization better for staff AND customers
- An excellent way to provide the necessary feedback to employees

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Utilize Technology

Today it is not always possible for executives to meet every employee face to face. This is where technology becomes an invaluable resource to a company seeking to develop a sustainable culture of improvement. Technology can provide a means for every employee, supervisor, and manager to engage in collaboration to innovate and improve the business in cases when, ordinarily, such interactions wouldn't be possible.

To truly keep employees engaged over the long term, employee engagement needs a structure. The right technology platform can help managers measure engagement and recognize both engaged and disengaged team members.

Of course, such platforms can also connect people from different locations on different shifts, improving communication and reporting on results for exponentially improved engagement and continuous improvement.

(For more information about how technology impacts employee engagement, check out www.kainexus.com)



KaiNexus

www.kainexus.com

The best way to improve your business or organization is by leveraging the collective knowledge of every employee. KaiNexus is a cloud-based software platform that unites your team around opportunities for improvement and facilitates their progress from inception to ROI.

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