

Employee Engagement

There are many definitions of Employee Engagement, but the phrase basically refers to the relationship between an organisation and the people who work for it. Put simply, a happier, focused and more productive workforce, the more successful the company in achieving its goals. In everyday talk, people might refer to employee engagement with phrases such as 'pride in the job', 'going the extra mile', 'feeling valued' and 'loving what I do'.

What is it?

In 2009 in the UK, David MacLeod and Nita Clarke produced a report, '**Engaging for Success**' which said:

"This is about how we create the conditions in which employees offer more of their capability and potential." – David MacLeod

The report gave rise to an independent Employee Engagement Task Force, launched by the government, and the Engage for Success movement, which is widely supported across all sectors of the economy. Engage for Success aims to bring together leading research findings and experiences and to share expertise, ideas and practical guidance on 'nuts and bolts' of employee engagement.

In addition to increasing productivity, sales and profits, Employee Engagement has been identified as a critical factor to improve the health and safety performance of quarrying companies and the aggregates industry as a whole.

The law

The power of effective engagement with employees is reflected in the UK's Quarries Regulations (1999). Under Regulation 40, employers have a duty to ensure that the workforce actively participates in assessing risk and protecting the safety and health of everyone on site.

Systems and Procedures

The regulations are great at reminding us that a lot that can be achieved with simple and useful practices that can be quickly adopted. Some examples aimed at increasing employee engagement with regards to health and safety include:

- Health and Safety Committees – formal meetings with representation from sections of the workforce
- Toolbox talks – short, sharp presentations to highlight particular issues on a site or project
- Inspections – carried out by ‘non-management’ members of the workforce
- Feedback – suggestion boxes, incident reports and other ways to easily allow workers to raise issues with management
- Noticeboards – clean, tidy and regularly-updated notices on what’s going on

Culture

As well as having the right systems and processes in place, good employee engagement is a matter of creating the right culture within an organisation. **ACAS** describe 4 key elements to making sure the culture is right for good engagement:

Leadership: having a great vision with a powerful story and communicating this regularly

Line management: supervisors and managers having great personal skills so that they can relate to their staff through active listening, motivating, coaching and empowering

Voice: employees know first-hand what works and what doesn’t. Making sure that their voices can be heard is great for innovation and improvement and is one of the most powerful factors in motivation and job satisfaction

Trust: walking the talk – managers and leaders delivering on their promises

Why is it important to me?

The term ‘Employee Engagement’ might sound like management jargon, but the idea that there’s a difference between just going through the motions to putting your heart and soul into a job and

feeling the personal satisfaction and rewards that brings should make sense to everyone.

Understanding a little more about employee engagement and looking at how successful organisations create and sustain a culture with an engaged workforce can give you powerful insights into getting better results from your team.

If you needed further persuasion, remember that the **Quarries Regulations (1999)** says:

Participation of persons at work

40.—(1) It shall be the duty of the operator to make and maintain arrangements which will enable him and those persons who regularly work at the quarry to co-operate effectively in promoting and developing measures to ensure the health, safety and welfare of persons who regularly work at the quarry and in checking the effectiveness of such measures.

Participation? Make and maintain arrangements? Promoting and developing measures? Yes – it's talking about employee engagement.

IQ believes that good engagement with all colleagues is an important skill for professionals working in the quarrying and minerals products industry. It features on our **Skills Wheel** which captures all the key skill and knowledge areas we believe are vital to successful career development in the industry.

Where Next?

To find the Engaging for Success report and plenty of other advice and tips on employee engagement go to: www.engageforsuccess.org

For a number of helpful guides and articles on employee engagement, visit ACAS. In particular you may want to check out the advisory booklet called '**The People Factor**': www.acas.org.uk

Institute of Quarrying

IQ supports professionals working within the quarrying and minerals

products industry through membership and training. These factsheets are produced across a range of topics to share ideas and best practice. Further information can be found via the resources section on the IQ website www.quarrying.org.

Engagement, Influence & Impact Factsheets

www.quarrying.org

