TALENTMAP

Introduction to Employee Engagement

Whitepaper

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HERE'S SOMETHING THEY'LL PROBABLY NEVER TEACH YOU IN BUSINESS SCHOOL: AS A MANAGER, YOU HAVE THE GREATEST INFLUENCE ON YOUR ORGANIZATION'S GROWTH.

TalentMap has studied human behavior for more than 15 years. Through this research, TalentMap has clearly proven that managers are the critical link to influencing employees' performance and success.

High-performance managers increase productivity and success by leading with a focus on employee engagement. They consistently create an engaging environment that energizes and motivates employees and teams. And TalentMap and others have established that high levels of employee engagement link to nine critical performance outcomes.

With a high-performance manager in place, everything goes well for a team. People love their jobs, they are productive, customers are engaged, and the organization grows. When the wrong person is manager, nothing fixes it. Not compensation, not benefits –nothing.

One of the greatest challenges you face as a manager is to enhance employee and team performance.

Managing with a focus on employee engagement will:

- help you drive and sustain high levels of **performance**

- gain the **commitment** and aspirations of your employees

- make your job **easier** and more fulfilling

Five primary accountabilities of a manager

In most organizations, managers are accountable for five important activities:

1. **Recruitment/Talent Selection** – Recruiting and selecting employees with talent that matches the best performers and that has the potential for excellence in the role.

2. **Development** – Supporting employees to garner the knowledge, skills, and experiences they need to develop their talents into strengths and express those strengths as proficiency and excellence in their roles.

3. **Employee Engagement** – Creating a work environment where employees are enthusiastic about and involved in their work and the organization as a whole.

4. **Performance Management** – Helping employees meet and exceed the results and outcomes they are expected to contribute to the organization.

5. **Promotion or Transition** – Enabling and supporting employees to advance to a new role and/or set of responsibilities that are suitable for their strengths, current stage of development, or life circumstances.

You are responsible for creating an engaged, committed team and holding your employees accountable for their performance. This guide provides insights to help you build an engaged, committed, and high-performing team.

Managers are the critical link to building engagement

As a manager, you set the tone for the work environment. You typically play several roles at once, including a subject-matter expert, an individual performer, a technical or project manager, and sometimes even a leader in the organization. You must manage yourself, manage your direct team, build and create efficiencies, and support and act on the organization's goals and values. You constantly switch roles as tasks, situations and expectations change.

Additionally, you must meet these complex demands despite budget constraints and changes in customer needs, technology, and ways of doing business. All the while, organizations face pressure to grow faster, which leaves less time to achieve their financial goals. Ultimately, this leads to having to do more with less –faster.

What has not changed is that the company expects you to continually lead your team to higher levels of performance.

TalentMap has researched and worked with managers, teams, and organizations to identify exactly what sparks individual growth, development, and high performance. Through this research, TalentMap found that high-performance managers do three things simultaneously. They:

– lead using a **strengths-based management** approach

– **focus on the engagement** of their employees and teams

– **demand increased levels of performance** and results

This Introduction to Employee Engagement guidebook is specially design to help you learn to focus on and build employee engagement to increase performance.

Research has found:

– Managers can account for as much as **76%** of the variance in their employees' engagement.

– Approximately **70%** of the reasons employees give for leaving an organization can be attributed back to issues in which their local manager had direct influence.

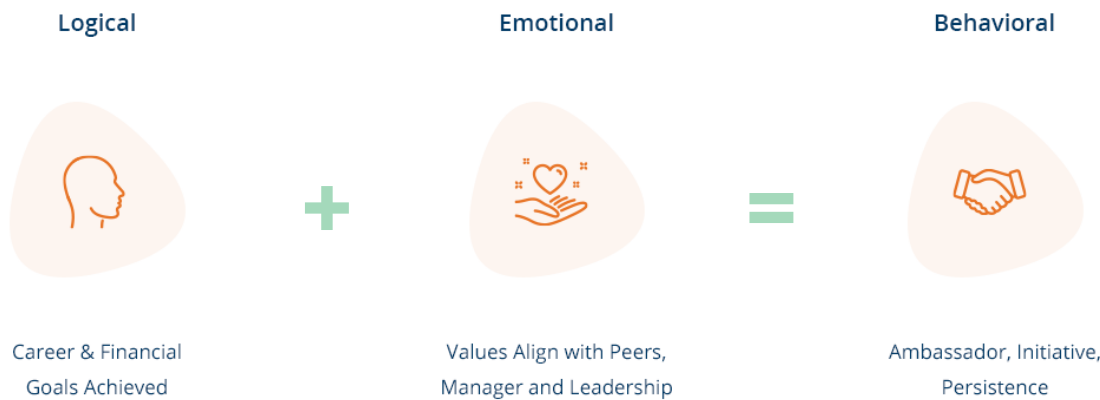Estimating the Influence of the Local Manager on Employee Engagement, 2014

Employee engagement matters

Engagement isn't just a buzzword. It fuels hard-core business results.

These days, "employee engagement" seems to be a common term. But about 15 years ago when TalentMap set out to understand workers' productive motivations on the job, nearly no one had put these two words together. Today, some leaders still are not clear about what "employee engagement" means or why it is valuable.

TalentMap defines 'employee engagement' as a strong **emotional and intellectual** connection that an employee has for their **job, co-workers, manager and organization,** that, in turn, influences them to apply **discretionary effort** to their work.

Logical		Emotional		Behavioral
	+		=	
Career & Financial Goals Achieved		Values Align with Peers, Manager and Leadership		Ambassador, Initiative, Persistence

Engaged employees believe that their basic workplace needs are met and that they have a chance to contribute, experience a sense of belonging, and enjoy opportunities to learn and grow. Think of employee engagement as an unwritten social contract between employee and employer.

TalentMap's research proves that when employees are engaged, they exert more discretionary effort on the job, going above and beyond what their role typically requires. Engaged employees are more productive, profitable, and customer-focused. They have fewer safety incidents and are more likely to withstand temptations to leave their organization. In the best companies employee engagement transcends a human resources initiative to become an approach to high-performance management and a way of doing business.

TalentMap's research shows that the most engaged teams in its database outperform the least engaged teams on eight important performance outcomes:

- higher profitability
- increased productivity
- higher customer ratings
- reduce safety incidents

- less absenteeism
- lower turnover
- higher quality
- less shrinkage (theft)

Don't be satisfied with satisfaction

There is a difference between engagement and satisfaction.

While many organizations spend a lot of time and money measuring employees' overall satisfaction, it is not a great indicator of high performance. TalentMap's research shows that although keeping employees happy or satisfied can help build a more positive workplace, simply measuring workers' satisfaction or happiness levels is insufficient to create sustainable change, retain top performers, and positively affect the bottom line.

Satisfied or happy employees are not necessarily engaged employees. Engaged employees have well-defined roles in the organization, make strong contributions, are actively connected to their larger team and company, and are continuously progressing. Engagement includes satisfaction in addition to the unique aspects of how individuals emotionally connect with and perceive their daily work lives in their teams.

SATISFIED

– may or may not be productive

– put their time but not necessarily their energy into their work

– take a wait-and-see attitude toward their job

ENGAGED

– work with passion

– perform at consistently high levels

– drive innovation and move their organization forward

World-class employee engagement equals higher earnings per share

The bottom line is that there is a proven relationship between employees' workplace engagement and their companies' overall performance. Persistent, targeted attention to engagement at the organizational and team levels can lead to growth in any industry. Research has shown that companies in the top 10% of employee engagement exceeded their competition by 147% in earnings per share (EPS) on average.

Feelings are facts

The simple phrase succinctly captures almost everything we need to know about how employees perceive their interactions and relationship with their employers. More often than not, the distinguishing factor of a particular event, reaction, or experience is an emotional component, rather than a rational one.

Management and business economics have operated under the assumption that human beings are predominantly rational; however, human beings are first and foremost emotional. Most of our decisions, behaviors, and choices are predominantly based on emotional, relational, or intangible factors and not rational or functional ones.

Emotions are at play in every work environment:

– They are part of the relationship between employee and manager

– They are part of the relationship among employees

– They affect whether an employee feels valued and respected

– They affect whether an employee feels his or her opinions count.

Consider this: What is the number one reason why people leave their jobs?

The number one reason why people leave their jobs is that they don't feel appreciated. Yet, according to one poll, an astounding 65% of U.S. workers reported receiving no recognition for doing good work in the past year. While the exact number varies from country to country, it does point to something that is consistent worldwide: People do not feel appreciated by their managers.

We could write off this issue as a sad but irrelevant emotional deficit if reinforcement were not so important to motivation on the job. But it is.

The effects on the organization begin with intentions to quit: Employees who do not feel adequately recognized are twice as likely to say they will leave their organization in the next year. There are even more profound consequences for outcomes short of quitting that reflect the energy that employees bring to work each day.

The point is this: If you want to create a great work environment and drive performance, you have to be able to meet your employees' functional, emotional, and relational needs. #12x

What was your best day at work?

Think for a moment about the best day you have ever had at work. Reflect on a day when everything went well –you pushed yourself, you had a feeling of accomplishment; you felt that your organization supported you, and you generated results.

Think about how your environment influenced your feelings about and commitment to your work, answer the following questions.

What was that day like?

What specifically made it a great day for you?

What would need to happen to have more days like this?

Leading with a focus on engagement
Employee engagement is not a one-time event.

Circumstances, needs, and perceptions change. Building an engaged team is a continuous endeavor that requires a year-round commitment. Regardless of the type of team you manage, you are not fulfilling your responsibilities as a manager unless you diligently attend to you team's engagement. There is no easy perception for improving engagement. There is no all-encompassing cure that will suddenly cause all of your employees to become engaged. **Engagement is hard work and requires continual and deliberate action.**

Creating high levels of engagement happens over time by continually focusing on fluctuating behaviors, processes, and systems to meet, anticipate, discuss, and positively respond to your employees' changing needs. Do not think of engagement as one more thing to do, think of it as the thing to do. When your team achieves high engagement, it makes everything easier.

20,000 moments a day

According to Nobel Prize-winning scientist Daniel Kahneman, we experience approximately 20,000 individual moments in a waking day. Each moment lasts just a few seconds but can have a tremendous effect on those with whom you interact. If you consider any strong memory –positive or negative –you will notice that the imagery in your mind is actually defined by your recollection of a precise point in time. Rarely does a neutral encounter stay in your mind. Memorable moments are usually positive or negative. In some cases, a single encounter can change your life forever.

As a manager, you must lead with a focus on your employees and the conditions in their local work environment to influence their engagement. While you may not have 20,000 moments at work each day, you do have many opportunities to act on existing moments of influence in multiple ways to increase engagement.

THESE OPPORTUNITIES ARE CALLED "TOUCHPOINTS." A TEAM DISCUSSION IS A TOUCHPOINT. SO, TOO, IS A ONE-ON-ONE MEETING OR A QUICK COMMENT OR DISCUSSION IN THE HALL.

Engagement every day

You can often find touchpoints in your daily activities. You don't necessarily have to do extra things. Sometimes it means simply being aware of these moments and how you go about your work. Here are some touchpoint examples:

- **Email** – Send a weekly email to your team to initiate a discussion about engagement issues or progress toward achieving performance goals. Ask for feedback. When employees know they are heard, it has an effect on their engagement and it helps with direction.

- **Team meetings or huddles** – Have short five-to lO-minute huddles with your team daily. Encourage everyone to participate. Make sure they know that these are not YOUR meetings. These are THEIR meetings. Value their opinions, and let them know that you will act as needed to address their concerns.

- **Walkabouts or walking the floor** – Managers need to strive to get out from behind their desks and manage the team by walking around so that they see and interact with employees in their work environment on a regular basis. Communicating regularly with employees, providing the answers to their questions –even if it isn't the answer they want to hear –asking them for their opinions, and involving them in solving problems will help you get where you want to be faster.

- **Coaching moments** – Watch for coachable moments. When you are walking the floor, you cast a large shadow. Focus your attention on employees. Talk to them. Ask them how they are doing. Look for moments in which you can encourage and support their efforts. When employees fall short of your expectations, it is crucial to coach and discipline them in a fair and consistent manner.

- **Engaging conversations** – By asking good questions, listening effectively, and involving your employees in the decision-making process, you create an opportunity to build an engaged, high-performance work environment.

Every moment has the potential to make a difference, influence engagement, and change everything for an employee. So how are you using these moments?

- How do you encourage your team?

- Is informal recognition a regular part of your team's culture?

- Do you solicit opinions from your team to give them a voice?

- Do you take opportunities to clearly define expectations for roles on new projects?

How can you influence engagement?

Consider your current interactions with your team and with each employee. Identify three additional touchpoints where you can make a difference, affect engagement, and change everything for the team and for your employees.

1. Performance Review

2. Walking the Floor

3.

4.

5.

Consider what you can do to influence your team's and each employee's engagement through these touchpoints.

Touchpoints	Ways I Can Influence

Individualize your approach

The traditional approach to management suggests that you are better off treating all of your employees the same. However, this viewpoint ignores the fact that human beings are profoundly different from one another.

High-performance managers recognize and understand the fundamental differences among their team members and think about the implications in the workplace. These managers are energized by the potential these diverse individuals bring to the table. They feel as if they can never learn enough about each person on their team. They can describe in detail each employee's unique talents; what drives each one; how each one naturally thinks, feels, and behaves; and how each one builds relationships.

You must talk with each team member to individualize your approach, engage each person, and learn what energizes, excites, and motivates him or her. Having regular engaging conversations with individuals and your team is the most effective way to build engagement and increase performance.

Slight shifts in your behavior can lead to big shifts in engagement

You can do simple things to bring about big shifts in your employees' engagement. Consider these suggestions:

1. **Ask more and tell less.** Follow the 80/20 rule: Listen 80% of the time and talk 20% of the time.
2. Ask an employee on your team to name a recent work accomplishment he or she feels great about. **Celebrate these moments of success.**
3. **When you notice someone doing something right,** go out of your way to let this employee know what you observed and then provide positive recognition.
4. Find opportunities to **ask employees what they think is most satisfying and dissatisfying** about their role.
5. Sit with an employee just to hear what is going on. **Don't have an agenda. Just be present.**

What High-Performance Managers Do Differently

– Understand and appreciate that each employee will likely have different engagement needs.

– Recognize that engagement is built on an individual basis as well as a team basis.

– Know that engagement starts with them.

– Realize that almost every moment at work has the potential to make a difference and can influence engagement positively or negatively for employees and the team.

The TalentMap engagement survey

How can you measure how well you are doing as a manager in building an engaged work environment? As with any other important business outcomes, you need a way to measure your current engagement level so that you can know how to improve it. TalentMap developed a robust employee engagement measurement and management methodology to provide you with accurate, insightful, and actionable employee engagement data.

Why measure employee engagement?

"If you can't measure it, you can't manage it."

High engagement levels help to increase an employee's odds of success. Teams that get engagement right improve their odds of having higher performance on the important outcomes organizations care about most. When comparing top-performing teams against bottom-performing teams, the average differences were:

- 10% higher **customer ratings**
- 22% greater **profitability**
- 21% greater **productivity**
- 25% less **turnover** (high-turnover organizations)
- 65% less **turnover** (low-turnover organizations)
- 48% fewer **safety** incidents
- 28% less **shrinkage** (theft by employees)
- 37% less **absenteeism**
- 41% fewer patient **safety** incidents
- 41% fewer **quality** defects

The statistics show that the greater the percentage of engaged employees and teams in your organization, the more likely it is to meet –and potentially exceed –its business goals.

How TalentMap measures employee engagement

TalentMap measures employee engagement based on workers' responses to its unique six core engagement questions and links your team's engagement score to 12 actionable workplace practices with proven links to performance outcomes.

Although measuring employee engagement is an increasingly common practice in the business world, TalentMap's employee engagement index is distinct in that it is:

1. backed by rigorous science
2. linked to proven performance outcomes
3. actionable at the local level

TalentMap administers its survey to employees in various companies, non-profits, and other organizations worldwide in an effort to help clients improve their employee engagement. Meanwhile, TalentMap researchers continually study findings from research on the TalentMap survey results to learn more about employee engagement's effect on organizational and team performance.

Factors such as earnings per share (EPS), profitability, productivity, and customer ratings are all key indicators in determining an organization's health and growth potential. For leaders who are responsible for these outcomes, the research shows that the TalentMap process is more than just another human resources initiative; it is the best measurement tool for initiating company wide transformation to create sustainable growth. By intentionally focusing on measuring and managing employee engagement using TalentMap engagement scores, companies gain a competitive advantage that keeps them moving forward. Research shows that concentrating on employee engagement can help them withstand —and possibly even thrive —in challenging economic times.

FOR THE PAST 15 YEARS, HIGH-PERFORMING, TALENTED, AND TRUSTED MANAGERS IN SOME OF THE NORTH AMERICA'S BEST ORGANIZATIONS HAVE USED THE TALENTMAP SURVEY TO DRIVE STRENGTHS-BASED, ENGAGEMENT-FOCUSED, AND PERFORMANCE-ORIENTED CHANGE THROUGH THEIR TEAMS AND INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES.

Using your TalentMap survey results

Measuring engagement is one thing; understanding and using the results is another. You need a report that is robust but practical. TalentMap reports make it easy to interpret and use your survey findings. These reports give you actionable information about your team's engagement.

The TalentMap survey comes with two types of reports that help you get the most out of your results:

1. The Overall Executive Report contains comprehensive results for all employees who complete your survey.
2. Individual Manager Reports provide results for business units or groups of employees.

Overall Executive Report

The Executive Report shows one overall company score – for your company's overall engagement. The report also shows the scores for each of the survey items. More importantly it shows the overall key drivers of engagement for the organization.

Individual Manager Report

If you have five or more direct reports that completed the survey you may receive and individual manager report. This report provides an overall engagement score for your group, it shows results for each questions and it identifies the key drivers for your group or segment of employees.

The Individual Manager Reports include the following information:

Group Engagement Scores

The group engagement scores shows engagement levels for you direct reports. The score is an average of the averages for the scores you receive for the six engagement questions (items).
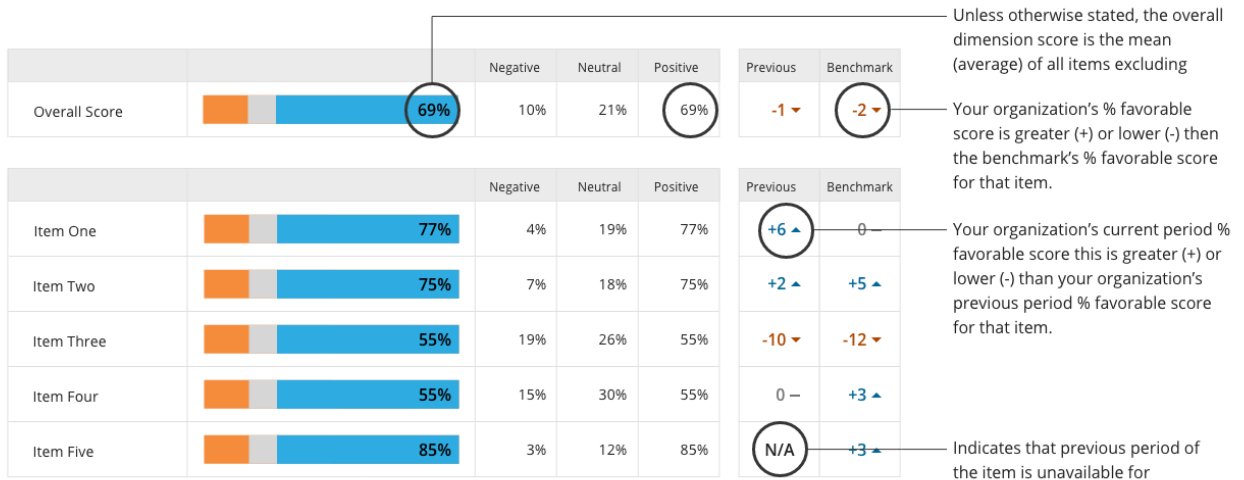
Sample

The sample is the total number of employees who took the survey. Depending on your survey participation rate, the sample on your report may not necessarily match the total number of employees invited to participate. The reports show the sample of employees who took the survey. Respondents are required to answer all the engagement questions but they are not required to answer all of the other survey items for their responses to count.

TalentMap Database

The TalentMap Benchmark database percentile rank shows how your overall engagement score and individual engagement questions compare with TalentMap's database of organizations that have administered the same survey. These benchmark values are useful in gauging engagement relative to other organizations. Additionally, your employees can refer to these rankings when setting goals for improving engagement.

Understanding Your Report

Unless otherwise stated, the overall dimension score is the mean (average) of all items excluding

Your organization's % favorable score is greater (+) or lower (-) then the benchmark's % favorable score for that item.

		Negative	Neutral	Positive	Previous	Benchmark
Overall Score	69%	10%	21%	69%	-1 ▾	-2 ▾

		Negative	Neutral	Positive	Previous	Benchmark
Item One	77%	4%	19%	77%	+6 ▲	0 —
Item Two	75%	7%	18%	75%	+2 ▲	+5 ▲
Item Three	55%	19%	26%	55%	-10 ▾	-12 ▾
Item Four	55%	15%	30%	55%	0 —	+3 ▲
Item Five	85%	3%	12%	85%	N/A	+3 ▲

Your organization's current period % favorable score this is greater (+) or lower (-) than your organization's previous period % favorable score for that item.

Indicates that previous period of the item is unavailable for

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Each item is show on the individual manager reports along with the percent of employee who Agreed (Blue) who were Neutral (Grey) or who Disagreed (Orange) , so that you can easily visualize how your group scored.

On the right you can also see how you group compares to the overall company score and to the Benchmark.

Measuring employee engagement is the equivalent of establishing the baseline health of your team. The results will reveal indicators of healthy and unhealthy conditions. You could also compare these findings, for example, with other teams or against the performance of the organization as a whole. These insights will help you understand how your team is doing relative to the organization and other teams.

How to use the survey results

No teams are exactly alike; no individual contributors will act or respond in the same manner. Ask questions, listen, and seek information that allows for a guided discussion leading to actions that work for your team's situation on their terms.

When you read and analyze your survey results, keep the following points in mind:

1. **Focus on the high scores and look for recognition opportunities within the results.** High scores indicate areas of strength. Take steps to ensure these items remain strengths. Think about what you and your team are doing to contribute to these strengths.

2. **Think about where your team might experience the biggest increase in engagement.** While you can do a lot to create a positive and productive environment, each employee needs to contribute to improving team engagement.

3. **Your reports provide a snapshot in time of your team's engagement level.** The best way to understand the numbers and know what is going on in the team is to talk with your employees.

4. **Remember that a high score (lots of green) represents that this workplace need is constantly met.** The best way to understand the numbers and know what is going on in the team is to talk with your employees.

5. **Pay close attention to the key driver for you group as they are outlined on your individual manager report.** These are the most important factors that influence engagement or disengagement for your group.

Every report tells a story. The data provide clues about the team's engagement, but not necessarily the whole story. Managers and teams should focus on the story and the meaning of the results and determine how this affects the work environment, rather than just concentrating on the numbers. Numbers cannot change an organization on their own; rather, it takes focused attention on the part of each team to create change.