

Engagement on the Run

A Dialogue and Discovery Tool for Managers

This tool is designed to help you explore others' levels of engagement in brief, informal, day-to-day interactions.

USE IT TO:

- Demonstrate the importance of engagement and ongoing dialogue.
- Understand how an employee views her or his engagement and why.
- Explore ways to maintain and increase an employee's satisfaction.
- Explore ways to maintain and increase an employee's contribution.
- Develop trust and clear, mutual understanding.
- Build and sustain a culture of engagement and partnership.

REMEMBER...

- Employees own their own engagement. You own yours, too.
- Engagement is a shared responsibility.
- What matters most is the dialogue, not agreement about the level of engagement.
- In any engagement dialogue, strive to **Establish Trust, Build Confidence, and Unleash Potential**.
- Focus on discovery by asking mind-opening questions and listening actively until the employee feels heard.
- Acknowledge the employee's efforts and encourage risk-taking.
- Create a feedback loop so the employee shares information and is heard. Then share relevant information and check for understanding.

THE ENGAGEMENT ESSENTIALS

Establish Trust

How can you demonstrate authenticity, openness, and caring?

Create a feedback loop

- Encourage people to talk to you.
- Support all modes of communication – in-person or by phone, email, video, IM, chat; and spoken or in writing.
- Ask specific questions that are also open ended.

Share information

- Communicate the “what” and “why.”
- Share information about YOU and your engagement.
- Be clear and candid about expectations.
- Let people know your motivation... why YOU care.

Build Confidence

How can you recognize and encourage effective actions?

Acknowledge efforts

- Give specific praise to let them know they're on track.
- Show genuine interest in their development.
- Reinforce their work, even when they don't completely achieve results.
- Express sincere and specific gratitude.

Encourage risk-taking

- Coach in small increments.
- Tolerate well-intentioned mistakes.
- Provide a safety net and help people learn from mistakes.
- Get out of your own comfort zone.

Unleash Potential

How can you help grow the employee and the business?

Ask mind-opening questions

- Use open-ended questions that require reflection.
- Lift restrictions to encourage free thought.
- Consider extreme conditions to promote creativity.
- Elicit thoughts, ideas, feelings, and reactions.

Listen actively

- Put your thoughts aside and focus on hearing theirs.
- Allow them to express their emotions.
- Check your understanding.
- Take time to explore ideas that differ from yours.

X Marks the Spot



FIVE LEVELS OF ENGAGEMENT

Level	Description
Engaged	At “the apex” where personal and organizational interests align, these employees contribute fully to the success of the organization <i>and</i> find great satisfaction in their work. They are known for their discretionary effort and commitment .
Almost Engaged	These employees are among the high performers and are reasonably satisfied. They may not have consistent “great days at work,” but they know what those days look like. They have the shortest path to travel to reach full engagement, promising a big payoff .
Satisfied, Not Contributing	Possible scenarios include: New employees (to the organization or a role) who are excited but not yet productive or clear on how they can best contribute; misaligned employees who may be working hard but on the wrong things; comfortable employees doing what they like to do – whether it matters to the organization or not.
Contributing, Not Satisfied	These employees are top producers who: don't like their work , aren't connected to their manager or the organization; are burning out , don't like their work environment ; aren't fulfilling career aspirations or have work/life needs that their job can't satisfy. These employees are at risk for leaving or slipping into full disengagement.
Disengaged	These employees are the most disconnected from organizational priorities, feel underutilized, contributing little , and clearly not getting what they need from work. They may indulge in contagious negativity. If they can't be coached to higher levels of engagement, their exit benefits everyone, including them.

Who Owns Engagement?



EXPLORE...

A Great Day at Work

Help employees relive a great day at work so that you see, hear, feel, and understand what engagement is for them.

Ask Mind-Opening Questions

- Tell me about a great day at work, one where you went home with a smile on your face or when the time just flew by.
- Where were you? Who else was with you? What were you doing? How did you feel?
- What did you accomplish? What personal aspirations did you achieve?

Their Engagement Drivers

- Ask mind-opening questions to help them discover and share their current engagement.
- Listen actively to understand fully.

Explore Satisfaction

- How did you feel about coming to work today? How have you felt lately?
- Tell me about the parts of your job that are most energizing for you. Why is that?
- How often are you getting the chance to do what you like best? What do you do best?
- What progress are you making toward your individual (or personal) goals?

Explore Contribution

- Tell me about how you're focusing your time and your energy these days.
- Which of your recent accomplishment pleases you the most? Why?
- How well are you able to devote time to what matters most to our team?
- Describe a challenge that's making it harder for you to do your best work.



WATCH FOR...

Opportunities for Engagement-on-the-Run Dialogue

- Explore engagement one-to-one or with your team, face-to-face, by phone, or by video. You can start (or continue) a dialogue by email or text. Use the mode of communication that fits the situation, the person, and you.
- Any time an employee asks about or mentions engagement, you have a natural opening for engagement-on-the-run dialogue. Anticipate and act on other opportunities, such as when:
 - A person is just joining the team, changing roles, or returning from an extended absence.
 - You have an upcoming in-person interaction (a ride-along, team meeting, etc.).
 - You realize that there's a person on your team with whom you haven't ever or haven't recently discussed engagement.
 - You see a person's passion and enthusiasm in action.
 - You see or learn about a person's significant discretionary effort or a meaningful success (for them or the organization).
 - The person expresses frustration, seems to have less energy, or doesn't seem as excited as usual.
 - The person says he or she wants career progression, development, or an opportunity to stretch.
 - The person expresses high satisfaction, seems to have more energy, or seems more excited than usual.

DISCOVER...

Ways to Maintain or Increase Engagement

- First, ask mind-opening questions to elicit and explore *their* ideas.
- Listen actively to understand fully.
- Then offer additional information or your own ideas... *as needed!*

Their Ideas about Satisfaction

- What ideas do you have for how we can help you continue to be energized?
- How might we give you more opportunities to do what you like best?
- What skills or knowledge do you want to use more often or better? Tell me your ideas about ways we can do that.
- Let's brainstorm some ways to create a work environment that fuels you. What are your first thoughts?

Their Ideas about Contribution

- What information or help do you need to keep your efforts aligned with our team's goals?
- Tell me your thoughts about how we can help you focus your energy and time better.
- Let's talk about the challenge you're facing. What are your ideas about how we can remove or reduce it?
- What's one small change we could make that would most help you sustain (or enhance) your current performance?

Some Ways to Maintain or Increase Satisfaction

The person might...

- Identify, reflect on, and consider sharing his or her personal purpose.
- Watch for more great days at work and tell you or others about them.
- Spread his or her enthusiasm to others on the team.
- Look for ways to maintain health and satisfaction outside of work.

You might...

- Look for opportunities for the person to do more of what's most enjoyable.
- Reinforce the importance of the person's individual goals and think about ways the work can help the person achieve them.
- Recognize the person's positive impact on others.
- Show your own enthusiasm and share why YOU enjoy your work.

Some Ways to Maintain or Increase Contribution

The person might...

- Contact you when more clarity is needed about priorities.
- Be realistic and candid about what he or she can accomplish.
- Share success stories with you and/or the team.
- Look for ways to add value.
- Think about who and what is needed to do better, and share ideas with you.

You might...

- Share information about changes in organizational priorities or goals.
- Provide more opportunities for the person to connect with peers in other territories.
- Replace assumptions with facts by asking more questions about challenges.
- Recognize efforts the person makes to contribute more or better.