HOW EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT EFFORTS ARE FAILING

In today's workforce "employee engagement", "employee retention", and "employee involvement" are at the forefront of concerns when it comes to the overall success of a corporation. However, recent studies have shown that these efforts are failing, despite major effort put in on the part of business and HR leaders. Engagement is now under scrutiny by researchers and others who find its promises hollow and some of its assumptions just plain wrong. Several surveys over the past few years has shown the reasons that employee engagement efforts have been failing, and the remedies to these failing efforts.

One problem with having disengaged employees is the fact that they are likely to spread negativity to others, leading to even more employees becoming disengaged. Gallup found that 13% of employees world wide are actively engaged in their work, leaving a staggering amount of employees disengaged. One issue that stands out is the lack of engaged leadership, leading to disengaged employees. 86% of business and HR leaders believe they do not have an adequate leadership pipeline and

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only 38% see this issue as an urgent problem. Gallup also discovered in their research that only a staggering 10% of people are naturally wired to be exceptional leaders. Also, the correct candidate for leadership positions are only chosen about 18% of the time, which leaves a lot of room for error.

In 2013, Edward Lawler III, a professor of Business at the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business, provides a few fallacies and truths when it comes to figuring out employee attitudes, beliefs, and behavior that get in the way of interpreting data collected in engagement surveys. The two fallacies that Lawler concluded was that:

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT MYTHS

MONEY DOES NOT MOTIVATE

"The fact is that for many people, money does motivate performance. Study after study has shown that when significant amounts of money are clearly tied to specific behaviors, those behaviors are more likely to occur."
-Edward Lawler III

A HAPPY WORKER IS A PRODUCTIVE WORKER

"In some cases, there were low correlations only because performing well made employees more satisfied, not because employees worked harder because they were satisfied."
-Edward Lawler III

One way to combat this issue is to simply ask your employees where you can improve. A mistake that many organizations make is not asking their lower level employees where they can improve. The Society for Human Resource Management boast that more than 80% of companies conduct employee engagement surveys. You can use a purpose-built survey tool like TINYpulse or you can use an anonymous Google Form. Make sure that you have formatted each survey or form to be encouraging to employees so that they will provide candid feedback. Employees want to feel like they are not simply a cog in the corporate machine, by making sure their voices are heard you are making sure that your employees are more engaged.