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LifeWorks *Managers* is a publication of LifeWorks Employee Resource, a *free*, 24/7 confidential service provided for managers, their employees and their families.

We can assist EMPLOYEES with:

- Relationship conflicts
- Parenting challenges
- Work-related problems
- Chemical dependency concerns
- Career concerns
- Financial issues
- Legal concerns

We can assist MANAGERS with:

- Performance-related employee issues
- Supervisory referrals
- Employee Engagement
- Conflict Resolution

1.800.577.4727

Whether it is a work, family, or personal issue, we're here for you.

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Helping Managers Be *Effective Leaders*

In business, managing people involves being an expert in your field plus having, or developing, effective people skills. How to motivate others so they can be productive while keeping business objectives in mind is not easy. Your company recognizes the special challenges you face. That's where LifeWorks can help. When faced with employee or management issues LifeWorks is here to help you and your employees. ■

Managers



Rules of Engagement

Much has been said over the last several years about the importance of "employee engagement." Many organizations have utilized various methods to measure employee engagement. You have likely been asked at some point to participate in such activities. So, what is the big deal? Why should you, as a manager, really care?

First, what is 'employee engagement?' An engaged employee is someone who is committed to the organization's goals and mission but is also given the tools and the encouragement to contribute in a way that is meaningful to him or her as well as to the organization. When an organization has a fully engaged workforce, it is the best win-win situation.

It is not just win-win for employees and the organization, either. While overall job satisfaction is high, customers are happier, too. According to a 2008 report, Best Buy reported that stores which increased employee engagement by a 10th of a point (on a 5 point scale) saw an increase in sales by \$100,000 for the year. (Scott Flander, Human Resource Executive, "Terms of Engagement," Jan. 2008).

According to BlessingWhite, an international organizational consulting firm, "Engaged employees are not just committed... They are 'enthused' and 'in gear', using their talents and discretionary effort to make a difference in their employer's quest for sustainable business success."

In 2008, BlessingWhite asked 7,500 employees worldwide to participate in their engagement survey and here are a few of the findings:

- Fewer than 1 in 3 employees (29%) are fully engaged. 19% are actually disengaged.
- Engaged employees stay for what they give; disengaged employees stay for what they get.
- The most common factors influencing job satisfaction are more opportunities to use talents, and career development and training.
- Only about half of the employees trust senior leadership but 75% trust their immediate managers. Even many disengaged employees trust their managers (44%).
- Managers fall short in encouraging and rewarding their employees' use of talents.

MAKING LIFE WORK FOR YOU & YOUR EMPLOYEES

WE'RE HERE FOR YOU

Q & A

Q: *"I am a fairly new manager and one of my employees recently had a temper tantrum at work. He exploded at one of his co-workers and threw a chair across the room. I was pretty scared but chalked it up to some stress he has in his life. I just told him to take the rest of the day off to cool down. Should I have done anything else?"*

A: Being a new manager can be very challenging especially when it comes to issues such as anger and violence. Anger outbursts such as this can be intimidating and frightening. Here are some tips for similar situations:

- *Check out* and follow your company's policies regarding **anger and violence in the workplace**. Have a clear idea of what actions to take before a situation like this occurs.
- *Document* the incident and let your manager, or an HR representative, know what happened. They can review and advise you if additional actions should be taken.
- *Get support* for your employees and yourself. Emotional outbursts can be upsetting to any group or persons who were involved. As a manager, confidentiality is important so choose your support wisely.

LifeWorks is here to assist you in such circumstances. We can be the free, confidential support you need to be an effective manager. If you have questions about how to handle anger or violence in the workplace, LifeWorks Employee Resource can help.

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EFFECTIVE MANAGING

Based on these findings, since managers already have the trust of most of their employees, **managers are well positioned to help foster and change the level of employee engagement.** Although there are many contributing factors that influence overall employee engagement (senior leadership engagement, corporate culture), managers have day-to-day contact with employees and can become an active force for change.

BlessingWhite recommends the following manager actions to help create a synergy for successful employee engagement.

- 1. Reflect and Recharge.** You can't energize your team if you are exhausted and burned out. What are some things you can do to increase your own level of engagement?
- 2. Hire engage-able team members.** Find the right team members up front. Take the time to understand who and what you are looking for so you don't lose time and energy training the wrong person for the wrong job.
- 3. Earn trust every day.** Earning trust usually comes down to being authentic and real with all of your employees equally. Are you consistent with your messages? Do you trust your employees to do their jobs once they have the resources they need?
- 4. Stress employee ownership.** Help your employees clearly understand their roles and responsibilities. Be available to be a coach and a mentor so they can learn and grow but let them know that ultimately, they choose their own path.
- 5. Know and remind people of your destination.** Fully understand your organization's mission and goals. You can't lead a team until you know where you're headed.
- 6. Remember that feedback is a gift.** Employees want and need feedback. Provide timely feedback so they have an opportunity to make changes quickly, if necessary. Much time is wasted when someone is headed in the wrong direction and is never given the opportunity to correct their course.
- 7. Talk and listen more.** Communication is often done via e-mail and other one way modes. But nothing will ever replace the power of one-to-one, direct conversations. Employees not only deserve your time and attention, they often have really good ideas and suggestions! One-to-one communication fosters trust and can help clarify personal and organizational goals.
- 8. Match projects, passion, and proficiency.** If you can help someone connect what is important to *them* with what is important to the organization, you can make a positive impact on their job satisfaction, commitment, and contribution.
- 9. Get to know your team members.** Learn what makes each person tick. Discover what motivates each person separately. Also learn to recognize individual signs of possible burnout or disengagement and address those issues quickly.
- 10. Tailor your coaching strategies.** Once you have a feel for each of your team member's level of engagement, you will need to tailor your approach with each of them. This can be difficult but each person is engaged at a different level. It is especially easy to take your most engaged employees for granted because they are self-motivated and self-sufficient. But they will continually need to be challenged and encouraged.

Attending to your employee's level of engagement can have amazing results. According to the BlessingWhite study, 85 percent of engaged employees planned on staying with their organization into the future. But consistently attending to engagement while also managing day-to-day stresses and strains can be very difficult. Try to give and receive support from other leaders in your organization. It can also be helpful to talk with a LifeWorks Employee Resource management consultant. Free, confidential consultations are available by phone or in person. When you help your employees grow professionally, you also grow as a leader!