

## One Critical Solution To Enhance Employee Engagement

Insights from Tom Hershberger, CEO, Cross Financial, 2020

There is one factor that makes up the majority of employee engagement. It isn't coworkers, policies, community support, technology, vacation time, or a really great Christmas party. According to Gallup, it is **managers**.

**Managers still own 70% of their employees' engagement, whether they are remote or not.**

Source: Lead Your Remote Team Away From Burnout, Not Toward It, Adam Hickman and Ben Wigert, June 2020

Let's frame that information from a different perspective. If employee engagement is low, it is a clear indicator that managers are underperforming.

### Who Wants To Be Average?

Average managers are plentiful. They are likely to be managers that receive average performance ratings. A rating that could just as easily be changed to mediocre, ordinary, or satisfactory. They don't generate significant challenges or problems for your organization, but they also aren't known to produce high-performing employees.

Leaders cannot expect their corporate culture to flourish if the managers entrusted to nurture that culture are performing at an average, mediocre, ordinary, or satisfactory level. We need managers that can champion your company's vision, mission, and values. A manager who excels at helping employees become a valued contributor to the organization's success.

### Conduct A Manager Situation Analysis

The cure for limited employee engagement is to focus on manager development. Approach your manager development the same way you would tackle a business planning project. Begin by completing a situation analysis of your employees, managers, and supervisors. This will help you collect and process important information about what is working and where improvements are necessary.

As a leader, begin by examining your own skill set and knowledgebase. Use your insights to identify where the organization is encouraging development and where improvements would enhance management activities. Then add employee feedback to your assessment, as they are an important source of information and can be reached effectively with a well-designed employee survey. Employees represent an essential data source when the impact of management practices is being evaluated.

Once your situation analysis is complete, use the information to identify your internal strengths, weaknesses, challenges, and opportunities. This doesn't have to be a complex process. Keep your assessments simple and easy-to-manage. Here is an easy way to convert a traditional SWOT analysis into simple observations.

**Strengths** - What do we need to leverage because it is our competitive advantage?

**Weaknesses** - What do we need to improve because it is important to our success?

**Opportunities** - What do we need to capitalize on because the benefits would be significant?

**Threats/Challenges** - What do we need to minimize to enhance company performance?

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## Use Your Insights To Develop Improvement Plans

A simple assessment of management roles, skills, and performance across the categories in a SWOT matrix will provide a practical, common-sense approach to enhancing manager performance and improving employee engagement.

1. Leverage strengths.
2. Improve weaknesses.
3. Capitalize on opportunities.
4. Minimize threats/challenges.

## And The Good News Is...

There is always room for improvement, but some organizations already possess exceptional employee engagement. If your employee engagement is high, your corporate focus migrates to a different landscape. Your horizon is now full of challenges and opportunities related to manager retention and how to effectively include them in your succession planning. The last thing a high-performing organization needs is for their talented managers to find a home at a lower performing organization that wants to move from ordinary to extraordinary.

Continually challenge and equip your managers to excel at their primary responsibility...the success of their employees.

Help them stay focused on employee unification, skills development, and overall engagement. The rewards will quickly appear in your bottom-line performance.

If you need assistance with staff development, we have industry specific resources ready for implementation.

Use this space to write down your initial SWOT observations.

### Strengths

What do we need to leverage because it is our competitive advantage?

### Weaknesses

What do we need to improve because it is important to our success?

### Opportunities

What do we need to capitalize on because the benefits would be significant?

### Threats/Challenges

What do we need to minimize to enhance company performance?