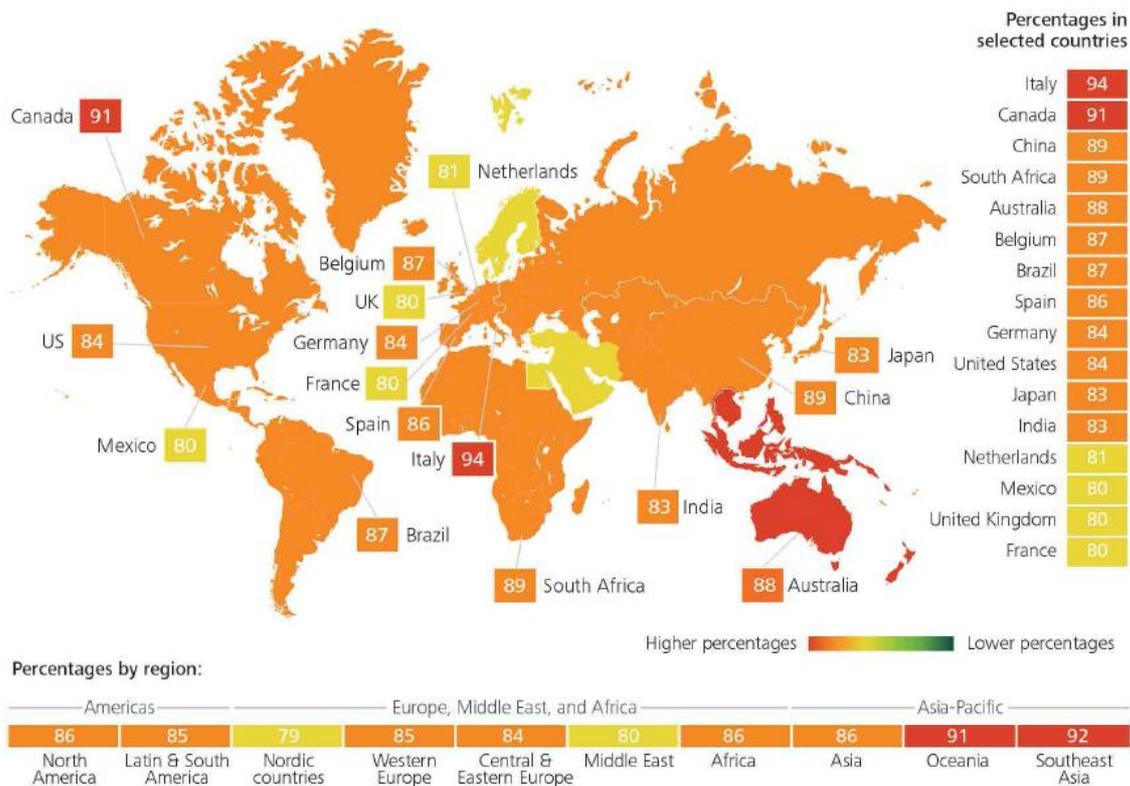


Now Is The Time To Review Your Employee Engagement Program

Employee engagement continues to be a challenge for organisations globally and Australia is in the top 5 countries that are seeing the importance of ‘engagement’ as a primary focus. Based on a study from Deloitte of approximately 7,100 companies globally where CEO, senior leaders and HR were surveyed 88% of Australian companies rated ‘engagement’ as ‘important’ or ‘very important’, which was 3% higher than the global average.



Graphic: Deloitte University Press | DUPress.com

Looking into this further, a study by Gallup says; “70% of employees feel indifferent or disengaged at work, almost regardless of country or industry”. Furthermore, the latest Medicare survey estimates this is costing the Australian economy between \$43B-\$60B annually, which is very high for a population of 23 million people with less than 12 million of them actually employed. Do the math and employee engagement becomes very compelling!

Despite that information I believe there is a flaw in current employee engagement programs. I spark the debate that measuring employee engagement is not the whole picture, whilst very important; it is merely the tip of the iceberg.

In the last 3-4 months we have been inundated by companies interesting in reviewing their existing employee engagement programs because they have not been achieving the results they expected. The big picture here is about having a workplace where the environment has their employees productive and performing at their best. Employing tactics like games room’s, bring your dog to work day, gym memberships, yoga classes, flexible workplace hours or location are all great initiatives but they largely address symptoms instead of the cause to building a healthy and thriving business.

Don’t be mistaken, engagement is important and why wouldn’t be! At the crux of it, engagement is about being focused – ‘in the zone’ at work. It is being in the mindset where your head has clarity, your actions are in rhythm, and you get feelings of vitality when you immerse yourself into your work resulting in creative, original, perhaps innovative outcomes or simply greater results. We have all experienced this form of engagement at some point or another but it is difficult to sustain!

Engagement is certainly one of the key areas organisations need to understand, measure and in many cases address. **Our work in positive psychology proves measuring employee engagement is only 25% of the opportunity. This means if you are scoring 85% in your existing employee engagement survey assessments but remain disappointed in the tangible results then you need to understand you are scoring 85% of a 25% measure. In other words you are really scoring ~21%, which might give you an understanding as to why your results are fledging.** To fully understand an individual’s wellbeing inside an organisation you need to measure more than just engagement. Fortunately, this new research can give organisations greater insight into their work force, culture, health and where existing programs have failed.

To create a workplace environment that willingly gets the best from its people, in addition to engagement, organisations need to focus on the following in the workplace;

Factor	Definition
Positive Relationships	How employees interact with their work colleagues and how they feel about those relationships is critical to employee wellbeing. When employees trust each other, their management and the organisation they can work with the sense of inclusion. Positive relationships give employees attachment and in return mutual regard for each other is earned.
Positive Emotions	How employees actually feel about themselves at work in the workplace environment is also critical to their mental health. Working with certainty can create optimism and feeling appreciated for what you do. Positive emotions allow people to feel in control and accomplished.
Meaning	Going to work where what you do has purpose, where you work stands for something you really believe in, when you refer to your work not as a job or even a career but a calling. In this state employees’ feel connected to something bigger than themselves, it gives them pride, identity and self worth.

The research shows that if you add engagement to the above list you are now measuring the actual health and well-being of your business and its employees working in it.



Each of the four drives described are independent; they cannot be ordered hierarchically or substituted one for another. You can't just have your employees engaged and hope they'll feel enthusiastic about their work in an organisation where bonding is not fostered, or work seems meaningless, or people feel defenceless. Nor is it enough to help people bond as a tight-knit team when they are disengaged or toiling away at deathly boring jobs. As you can see in the previous table, to achieve the organisational objectives you must address and manage all four drives in balance.

Importantly, the research shows there is a strong correlation between the four drives and tangible financial outcomes. When you compare organisations with top quartile results in these four drives vs organisations in the bottom quartile the following has been found;

- Earnings Per Share ('EPS') growth 2.6 times greater
- Customer advocacy 12% higher
- Productivity 18% higher due to less sick days alone
- Profitability 12% higher

Interestingly, companies with top quartile health and well-being improved circa 19% in operating income whilst the bottom quartile declined by 32% over the same period.

The world is changing rapidly because we are learning so much more about human capital. Employee satisfaction surveys have become obsolete because satisfaction is such an average result to strive for. Employee engagement surveys will soon follow, as new science paves the way for new thinking, as we all strive for greater organisational performance. It is time for companies to review their existing engagement programs, so here are three things to consider;

1. Redefine engagement: Engagement is not simply about turning an organization into a great place to work. It also means reaching down to the team and individual levels to foster greater relationships, highly motivated teams of employees doing work they love to do.
2. Create a sense of passion, purpose, and mission: Fun perks are great at resolving symptoms but companies that succeed in having highly engaged employees focus intently on driving meaning and passion among workers.
3. Focus on all three levels: Engagement must be created, measured, and monitored at the organization, team, and individual levels.

Or talk to us! The future is coming you just need to be prepared for it!!

ABOUT 3D

3D is an advisory and technology firm specialising in people, leadership and culture. Our research and technology platform is founded on the scientific principles of applied behavioural science and positive psychology for the purpose to increase a company's effectiveness, performance and health to achieve its strategic goals through its people.

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