**Chapter 16 Employee Engagement**

A book which was first published in 1999 and which made a big impact on the business community is ‘First, Break all the Rules’ by Buckingham and Coffman

They carried out an extensive research study based on 24 companies, 2500 business units and 105,000 employees in the public as well as private sector. They were looking at how staff turnover differs in an organisation from one department to the other. In departments with low staff turnover they found that there were 12 most important issues to employees.

We have adjusted their questionnaire so that it can be answered by the team leader, thinking of each team member separately.

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| **Q** | **Twelve Questions** | **Your Score[[1]](#footnote-1)** |
|  |  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1 | Do staff know what is expected of them at work?  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2 | Do they have the materials and equipment they need to do their work right? |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3 | At work, do they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day?  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | In the last seven days, have they received recognition or praise for doing good work?  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5 | Do I, or someone at work, seem to care about them as a person? |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6 | Is there someone at work who encourages their development? |  |  |  |  |  |
| 7 | At work, do their opinions seem to count? |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8 | Does the mission/purpose of their company make them feel their job is important? |  |  |  |  |  |
| 9 | Are their associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work? |  |  |  |  |  |
| 10 | Does each person have a best friend at work?  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 11 | In the last six months, have I talked to you each person about their progress?  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 12 | In the last year, have they had opportunities at work to learn and grow?  |  |  |  |  |  |

Scale of 1-5 with ‘1’ being strongly disagree and ‘5’ being strongly agree.

‘What do I get?’

1. Do they know what is expected of me at work?

2. Do they have the materials and equipment they need to do their work right?

‘What do they give?’

3. At work, do they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day?

4. In the last seven days, have they received recognition or praise for good work?

5. Do I or someone else at work seem to care about them as a person?

6. Is there someone at work who encourages their development?

‘Do they belong?’

7. At work, do their opinions count?

8. Does the mission/purpose of our company make them feel like their work is important?

9. Are their co-workers committed to doing quality work?

10. Does each person have a best friend at work?

‘How can they all grow?’

11. In the last 6 months, have they talked with someone about their progress?

12. This last year, have they had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

Strongest links to retention:

1. Do they know what is expected of them at work?

2. Do they have the materials and equipment they need to do their work right?

3. At work, do they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day?

5. Do I or someone at work seem to care about them?

7. At work, do their opinions count?

Of the twelve, the most powerful questions are those with a combination of the strongest links to the most business outcomes (including profitability) are:

1. Do they know what is expected of them at work?

2. Do they have the materials and equipment they need to do their work right?

3. At work, do they have the opportunity to do what they do best every day?

4. In the last seven days, have they received recognition or praise for good work?

5. Do I or someone at work seem to care about them?

6. Is there someone at work who encourages their development?

What do Great Team Leaders Do? - The Four Keys:

1. When selecting for someone, they select for talent… not simply experience, intelligence or determination.

2. When setting expectations, they define right outcomes… not the right steps.

3. When motivating someone, they focus on strengths… not on weaknesses.

4. When developing someone, they help to find the right fit… not simply the next rung on the ladder.

A Sobering Thought: An employee may join a company because (they are) lured by their generous benefits package and their reputation for valuing employees. But it is (their) relationship with the immediate manager/team leader that will determine how long they stay and how productive while there. …all the good will in the world can only do so much. In the end these questions tell us that, from the employee’s perspective, the immediate boss (line manager) is more important than the company.

You are recommended to read the book ‘First, Break all the Rules’ by Buckingham and Coffman (1999) and its follow up ‘Now Discover Your Strengths’ by Buckingham and Clifton (2001)

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)