Episode #24: Tips to Improve the Engagement of Your Employees during the Covid-19 Pandemic, Part 3

Welcome to THE CAREER ACCELERATOR, the podcast where corporate managers will find tips and tools to deliver results through others.

Hello. Today I want to share three more tips that will help you, as a manager, significantly increase your employees' engagement, especially now that most or all of them are working remotely from home and may likely be experiencing a level of isolation. I'm your host, coach Percy Cannon.

In our last episode I covered the second driver to improve employee engagement: Employees want to feel that their job is relevant.

I offered three suggestions to eliminate the feeling of irrelevance in your employees:

1. First, establish a clear connection between your priorities and at least one of the performance objectives of each of your employees.

2. Next, jump on Zoom, Teams or any other video-communication platform and talk to each one of your employees individually. Do your best to make the connection between your priorities and their objectives as clear as possible.

3. My third suggestion is to schedule a recurring reminder in your favorite device or physical agenda to not let one, two or a maximum of three months go by without sharing some form of appreciation with each of your employees about the relevance of their job.

Today I want to cover the third driver to improve employee engagement: Measurement.

Employees want a clear way to assess their progress and success in their jobs. They want to be able to evaluate by themselves if they are doing well at work. They want to know if they are having a good or a bad day, week or month. They cannot be fulfilled in their work if their achievements depend on the subjective opinion of others.

A measurement doesn't have to be a precise metric or a sophisticated methodology, but there needs to be a way that is simple enough for employees to measure their work by themselves.

Unfortunately, that is not always the case. In the two previous episodes I compared the different experiences I had in my first two jobs, and how my managers and the nature of my roles were key factors that contributed to my feeling of anonymity and not finding my work relevant in my first position. Conversely, in my second job my manager was a big contributor to making my work noticeable and relevant.

As you may have anticipated, a lack of measurement was another driver of dissatisfaction in my first job, where essentially there was no way for me to track my progress at work.

Conversely, in my second job, where I was responsible for the success of a consumer brand, it was impossible for me not to know if I was doing well. Here are some of the ways that my job was measured:

- Every month I received my brand's sales statistics. Meeting or exceeding objectives was good, missing them was bad. Later, with the aid of technology, I was able to receive daily sales reports, so the measurement was even more constant.
- Every two months I received a market share report. Share gains were good, flat share was bad, share losses were ugly.
- On a regular basis, I was responsible for numerous activities with deadlines for deliverables. Meeting deadlines was good, missing them was bad.

If you have people reporting to you, take advantage of the current remote work situation triggered by Covid-19 to jump-start your engagement efforts with your employees by improving the measurability of their work.

I have three suggestions on how to do it:

1. First make sure that you know what the top three performance objectives are of each of your employees. Assuming these have been communicated to them, check if the underlying rationale behind the original objectives has changed, which would require making adjustments.

2. Next, jump on Zoom, Teams or any other video-communication platform. Validate their understanding of and commitment to their performance objectives. This practice can become a great opportunity to reinforce your expectations for each employee.

3. My third suggestion is to individually ask each employee if they have the tools to assess if they are doing a good job. If there isn't a good initial response, switch to brainstorm mode and work together to arrive at a practical and simple way to achieve this. If it helps, leverage any available sources of information and data that may be applicable to their work. It can be statistics about customer complaints, turnaround time for a particular task, product defects, etc.

I want to end this podcast with a summary of this and the two previous episodes. In them, I have covered the three drivers of dissatisfaction at work outlined by the bestselling author Patrick Lencioni in his book *The Truth about Employee Engagement*. They were:

1. The feeling of anonymity, which happens when a manager doesn't really know the employee.
2. The lack of relevance of one's job, where it is not clear to the employee how their job matters to somebody.
3. The absence of a clear way for the employee to assess and measure the success or failure of their work.

I invite you, as a manager, to tap into the huge upside potential of addressing these three drivers of dissatisfaction by getting to know your employees, clarifying how their job is relevant, and agreeing with them on how they can measure, on their own, the progress of their work.

Once you make these adjustments, you should notice a rapid improvement in their engagement and overall job satisfaction.

Remember, now more than ever, you have to take care of the human component of your employees.

I hope you enjoyed today's episode. In the next one, I will provide tips on how to become a multiplier, building on the excellent book from Liz Wiseman, *Multipliers: How the Best Leaders Make Everyone Smarter.*

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This is coach Percy Cannon, working to help you *make the rest of your life…the best of your life®.*

Percy's BIO

Percy provides corporate managers and leadership teams with customized coaching programs that help them develop the skills and capabilities needed to significantly increase their business results through others and accelerate their career growth.

Percy is an "alumnus" from three multinational corporations, Procter & Gamble, IBM & Microsoft, with whom he spent close to three decades.

Since 2011 he has been helping corporate executives, managers and employees *make the rest of their life…the best of their life®.*

Percy has worked in the United States and across several countries in Latin America as an Executive Coach, Leadership Team Consultant and Keynote Speaker, serving companies such as Microsoft, Procter & Gamble, Citibank, Tiffany & Avianca.

Percy is a Certified Professional Coach from Wainwright Global, Authorized Partner for "The Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team" and "Everything DiSC" and certified as a "Go-Giver" speaker & coach.

He published his first book in 2012-13 in English (*The Business Apostolate: Insights to Define and Achieve Your Mission in Life*) and in Spanish (*El Negocio Más Grande de su Vida*).

Percy is a Consulting Partner with Grupo Azimuth and the Chapter Director for the COO Forum in Southeast Florida.

He has lived in 9 different cities and 5 countries, and speaks English, Spanish and Portuguese fluently.

Percy is married, has 3 children and 6 grandchildren, and is a passionate runner & reader.

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