



# Geared for Success

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## Sparking Disengaged Performers

According to a recent survey from Gallup, 23 million U.S. workers are "actively disengaged". This represents a significant leadership challenge for keeping people on track, reaching performance goals and productivity numbers and creating an innovative, motivating work environment. Replacing employees can cost 1.5 to 3 times their annual salary. So, what can you do as a leader to manage those who "quit and stay" or "retire in place"? Ultimately, disengaged people can undermine the effectiveness of you, your team and your organization.

In the article, "The 4 Unmet Needs that Lead to Disengaged Employees" by Randy Conley, the author identifies four basic human needs for engagement. If any of these needs are not met, employees will begin to pull away from the organization and their work. The basic needs are:

1. **The Need for Trust** – Trust is at the heart of tapping into work passion for people and is the number one priority for leadership. It is the foundation for any successful relationship. Employees will give their best when they believe you have their interest in mind. Trust comes from open, transparent communication, investing in your people, treating everyone fairly, being consistent in your behavior, doing what you say you will and building a safe, approachable environment.
2. **The Need to have Hope** – People want to be in an organization where they will be able to grow, develop their skills, use their capabilities to the highest potential and progress. It is a leader's job to provide hope with their words and actions.
3. **The Need to Feel a Sense of Worth** – People have a need to feel confident that if they work hard, do their best, demonstrate commitment, make the organization better with their contributions, they will be recognized and rewarded in a fair way. Leaders can fulfill this need by thanking employees, noticing the good that is happening and delegating to help people grow and achieve.
4. **The Need to Feel Competent** – People need to be in jobs that align with the challenges of their skills. Leaders can help by noticing where employees thrive and where they are over/under challenged.



Motivating the disengaged employee is not an easy task. It takes a multi-angled approach—one in which as a leader you need to consistently demonstrate with your words and actions. If someone has been disengaged for a long time, your efforts may take longer to see impacts. Ideas for bringing the spark to your disengaged employee include:

- **Coach, Often** – Nurture your relationships in a one-on-one setting with your people to get to know them and the opportunity to know you.
- **Repeat Your Vision for the Future** – Over and Over – Get people onboard with a look into the future. Let everyone know the standards, goals and measures.
- **Get the Whole Team Moving Forward** – Peer pressure can help the disengaged begin to move with the team.
- **Reward and Recognize** – Look for both big and little things that are making the difference.
- **Listen carefully.** Put down your cell phone. Stop looking at your

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**"When people are financially invested, they want a return. When people are emotionally invested, they want to contribute."**

Simon Sinek



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computer. Really provide 100% attention to your people, which equates into value. Is there a reason for the disengagement (e.g. sickness? Big home issue?, Etc.)

- **Probe the Disengaged Employee** – Ask questions to see if there is a root cause for their behavior. Repeat your expectations. Follow-up. Document.
- **Don't miss a beat.** After one-on-one coaching sessions and team meetings, use email to summarize your expectations. Remember disengaged employees can create friction with high performers. Your communication is vital to reinforcing what is needed.

- **Speed of the leader, speed of the pack.** Move forward with the expectation all employees are on board. Don't let disengagement impact your enthusiasm, passion and wish to get things done.

Creating a team of engaged employees is a tremendous challenge. But, one in which your time and effort are important for the employee, you and your organization. Do not allow yourself to be sidetracked. Your continued efforts will help not only the disengaged but your high performing, engaged employees. Each of your efforts applied in consistent ways will be an investment worth doing.

Resource: [Love'em or Lose'em-Getting Good People to Stay](#), by Beverly Kaye and Sharon Jordan Evans

**"If your attitude is that only smarter people have something to teach you, your learning opportunities will be very limited. But if you have a humble eagerness to learn something from everybody, your learning opportunities will be unlimited. "**

Clayton M. Christensen, author - "How Will You Measure Your Life?"

## How to Gracefully End a Networking Conversation

Summertime brings many opportunities for conferences, events and social get-togethers. Being savvy at networking enables you to meet more people and attain a broad range of information. Below are some strategies to help you maximize your time by knowing when and how to exit a conversation.

First of all, notice the "ARC". Every conversation goes through a flow.

Part 1 - The conversation builds, the dialogue is faster than normal and the energy is high.

Part 2 - The conversation has peaked. It is slowing down and the energy is slightly reduced.

Part 3 - Points have been made. The dialogue is slowing down and spaces between comments is noticeable.

When you have gone through the ARC and know it is time to leave, try any of the following:

- **Transition, recap and then, leave** - "I've enjoyed meeting you today. I especially value your tips on \_\_\_\_\_. I hope to see you throughout the conference."



- **Wait for a conversation break** - "It was wonderful to meet you. I'm going to mingle some more."
- **Grab more food or drink** - "I'm going to head to the food. It was fantastic meeting you."
- **Make it a benefit for them** - "I don't want to take up all your time. It was great chatting with you."

• **Introduce someone else into the conversation** - "Before I leave, I would like to introduce, \_\_\_\_\_. Great talking with you."

• **Shift the focus** - Tell the person you need to say "hello" to someone else. "It has been great talking to you. But I really need to say hello to a few other people. Enjoy the rest of the event."

• **Plan a follow up** - "Let's talk more later or by phone. Great meeting you."

Like many things, networking skills take time to develop. Set goals for the number of people you want to meet. Keep yourself open, learning and moving to best utilize the opportunity to meet others.

Resource: "How to End a Networking Conversation Tactfully", by Dorothy Tannahill-Moran.

## Embracing the Power of Team Through Delegation

Smart leaders realize that there is no such thing as single-handed success. It takes the team to work together to get where they are going. The inability to delegate is a limitation that not only holds back what you can get done-but is hurtful to the development of your team members. It provides individuals on the team the opportunity to showcase their talents, discover areas for growth and play an important role in the overall team's success.

By delegating, leaders make the best use of everyone's time and develop the skills and abilities of others. Arthur Pell, author and leadership consultant describes five elements of good delegation:

1. **Match the person with the work** - Be sure the person you choose will be able to be successful. Look to expand and stretch abilities and talents.
2. **Define the project tasks and communicate them clearly** - Specify and quantify what you expect for the final outcome and interim products. Ask questions to ensure they understand. Make yourself available and approachable for questions.



3. **Set control points** - Provide dates in which you and the person who is doing the work will come together to examine what has been completed. This is important for catching errors of thinking before the due date. It is a time to track progress, give feedback and help people solve problems.
4. **Allow for creativity and variations in work style** - Keep your focus on the end result, not the details of how the job gets done. Realize not everyone will approach the work in the same way you will.

5. **Show appreciation and recognition for a job well done** - When the project is complete, find ways to thank the person and debrief your impressions of the project, process and impact.

Delegation can be very stressful. With deadlines looming and issues building, leaders sometimes feel the need to take a project back and complete it him/herself.

And, frankly on occasion it may be necessary to do so. However, this should be the extreme exception. Growing the talents of your team is critical to build success. Let people know you are available to help, advise and support - but not to do their work.

## How to Give Clear Directions to a Group

Do you often have to repeat (and repeat again) what needs to be done when working with a team? Frustration mounts when people do not know what is expected of them. In the book, [Making Meetings Work](#), the author Karen Anderson provides tips for clarity in speech when giving directions:

1. Ask participants to do only three or fewer tasks in a sequence. Less is better. Remember people begin to think about doing the first thing when you are explaining the second. Then, repeat the sequence immediately after you have said it.
2. Use your fingers to emphasize your points - "There are 3 things I want you to do. (3 fingers visually shown). The first thing (1 finger)..." etc.
3. Visually list the instructions on a PowerPoint slide for further clarification.
4. Tie in the rationale or desired results. Adults want to know the "why" of what they are doing.
5. Ask for questions to ensure complete understanding and clarity.

**"Leadership should mean giving control rather than taking control and creating leaders rather than forging followers."**

David Marquet, author of [Turn the Ship Around-A True Story of Turning Followers into Leaders](#)

## Tips for Inclusive Leadership

As you grow, develop and get promoted, you are exposed to many different leadership styles. Some leaders we wish to emulate, others we learn what not to do. Building an inclusive environment is essential for the success of the team and organization. Inclusive leadership is motivating, energizing and fair to all. Each employee feels valued, respected and engaged in a shared vision. So what actions should a leader take to ensure that s/he is exhibiting inclusive leadership?

In an article from Case Western Reserve University-School of Management-- "Inclusive Leadership: Effectively Leading Diverse Teams", by Diana Billimoria, the author advises that leaders should:

- Be aware of his/her own stereotypes, biases and mental models that impede valuing diverse others.
- Hold others accountable for disrespectful behavior toward others. Adopt a "will not tolerate" mindset when it comes to inappropriate behaviors.
- Articulate the value of diversity on the team by soliciting everyone's opinion.
- Invite a diversity of people and thought processes to attend meetings
- Hire for diversity of experience, backgrounds, and opinions.
- Create a team environment that is fair, democratic, supportive and welcoming of questions and challenges.

Being an inclusive leader enables you to leverage diverse perspectives (ways of thinking) and approaches (ways of doing) to enhance the team's accomplishments. It builds loyalty, commitment and strength of performance among the team members. And, it sets a foundation for collaboration, understanding and valuing others.

## Managing Conflict with Emotional Intelligence

As you know, skillful conflict management is a fundamental part of our jobs as leaders. Conflicts -big and small-happen every day in the workplace. Using your Emotional Intelligence competencies can help you work through the complexities and challenges. Make a conscious decision to leverage your competencies to enhance how you approach and work through your next conflict.

Manage and listen to yourself first. Use your Emotional Self-Awareness skills to recognize your reactions, thoughts and feelings regarding the conflict at hand. Ask yourself questions like: Why am I frustrated? What thoughts am I having? What is upsetting me?

Make a conscious decision to express yourself in a constructive manner. Use your Emotional Expression to be deliberate in how you come across. Think before you speak

and react. Your Impulse Control will help you get through this difficult stage. As a leader you are in a "fish bowl" where everything you do and say are noticed by others. Be sure you are expressing yourself consciously instead of being emotionally hijacked.

Manage others in the conflict. Use Empathy to bring down the temperature of the situation and seek genuine understanding. Listen. Ask questions. Pull back to look for common ground. Use Interpersonal Relationships to interject a give and take to the conversation and acknowledge the importance of the other person.

Finally, create an environment focused on conflict resolution. Use the EQ competencies of Optimism, Problem Solving and Stress Tolerance to look for innovative answers in collaborative ways.

Resource: Multi-Health Systems, Leadership Report

**"Remember not only to say the right thing at the right time in the right place, but far more difficult still, to leave unsaid the wrong thing at the wrong moment."**

Benjamin Franklin

## Perfecting Your Elevator Pitch

As professionals, we are frequently asked - What do you do? And, we have been told to create a succinct "elevator pitch" that describes it. Try this - make the pitch about what you do for your customers, not the tasks you perform. Your pitch should answer the question - "What's in it for me?" For

example, if you work in a fitness company, don't say - "We have great nutrition counseling and a variety of exercise classes." Instead say, "We help people feel confident about their bodies." By using this technique, it can also keep the conversation going because the listener may ask, "How do you do that?"

Resource: Christy Wright, Business Coach

## Put'em Up, Put'em Up - Advice from the Cowardly Lion

Getting out of your comfort zone is easier said than done. But, every time you leave the comfort zone you must exhibit courage and bravery. As the Cowardly Lion put it - "Life is simply unbearable without a bit of courage." It takes courage to acknowledge the reality of an uncomfortable situation and take action. It takes courage to see problems in new and different ways. It takes courage to make the first step when you are fearful.

Margie Warrell, author of [Brave: 50 Everyday Acts of Courage to Thrive in Work, Love and Life](#), outlines four ways to exercise your bravery muscles:

- **Speak Up!** - If there is something you feel the need to say,

chances are there's someone who needs to hear it. Resolve to say what is necessary. Set the stage for success - think about when, how and to whom you should speak.

- **Accept Yourself** - Often our fear of rejection or fitting in stops us from being courageous. Be true to your authentic self.
- **Risk Failure** - Try new things even if you aren't sure you will be successful. Arm yourself with what it feels like when it doesn't turn out okay.
- **Scrap your Excuses** - Stop excusing yourself and step to the plate.

Remember every act of bravery brings you growth outside your comfort zone.



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