

Don't Be Satisfied with "Satisfied"

by Betsy Rigby

Overheard at a conference recently: *"When I started with this development office, I made sure I was in every morning at 7:30. If I needed to, I stayed late. I really wanted the boss to know I was ready for this job. Now that I'm the boss, everyone comes in around 9:00, leaves at 5:00 and there just isn't that same energy. I don't get it. I mean, the work is getting done but where is the commitment, the drive?"*

The answer is that he was part of an engaged workforce and he is now managing a satisfied workforce.

We hear all the time about satisfaction surveys. But do we really want a team that is just satisfied? They come in when they are supposed to. They do what they need to do. They leave when

it's time. The work gets done. Their salary and benefits are adequate. They feel relatively secure. They aren't actively seeking their next position. And all of that is good.

But even better is a team that is engaged and is putting in extra because they choose to. They don't watch the clock because they really like what they're working on and want to get it done. They have ideas. They contribute. They help with work outside of their job scope that contributes to the greater good of the organization. All of that is much better.

Employee satisfaction and employee engagement are similar concepts on the surface, and many people use these terms interchangeably. The importance of knowing the difference between

the two is critical for an organization to create a culture of engagement. Employee satisfaction covers the basic concerns and needs of employees. It is a good starting point, but it usually stops short of what really matters.¹

Satisfaction refers to how employees feel—their *happiness*—about their job and conditions, such as compensation, benefits, work environment, and career development opportunities. *Engagement*, on the other hand, refers to employees' commitment and connection to work as measured by the amount of discretionary effort they are willing to expend on behalf of their employer. Highly engaged employees go above and beyond the core responsibilities outlined in their job descriptions, innovating and thinking outside the box to move their organizations forward — much like volunteers are willing to give their time and energy to support a cause about which they are truly passionate.²

¹ <https://www.custominsight.com/employee-engagement-survey/what-is-employee-satisfaction.asp>
² ADP "Employee Engagement Employment Satisfaction Are They the Same Thing? An ADP Whitepaper"

- Employee satisfaction is the extent to which employees are happy or content with their jobs and work environment.
- Employee engagement is the extent to which employees feel passionate about their jobs, are committed to the organization, and put discretionary effort into their work.

Organizations with genuinely engaged employees have higher retention, productivity, customer satisfaction, innovation, and quality. They also require less training time, experience less illness, and have fewer accidents."³

According to Gallup's Engagement Measurement Model, employee engagement is the sum of four distinct categories aligned with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a construct which suggests that humans are motivated to fulfill basic needs before moving on to other, more advanced needs.

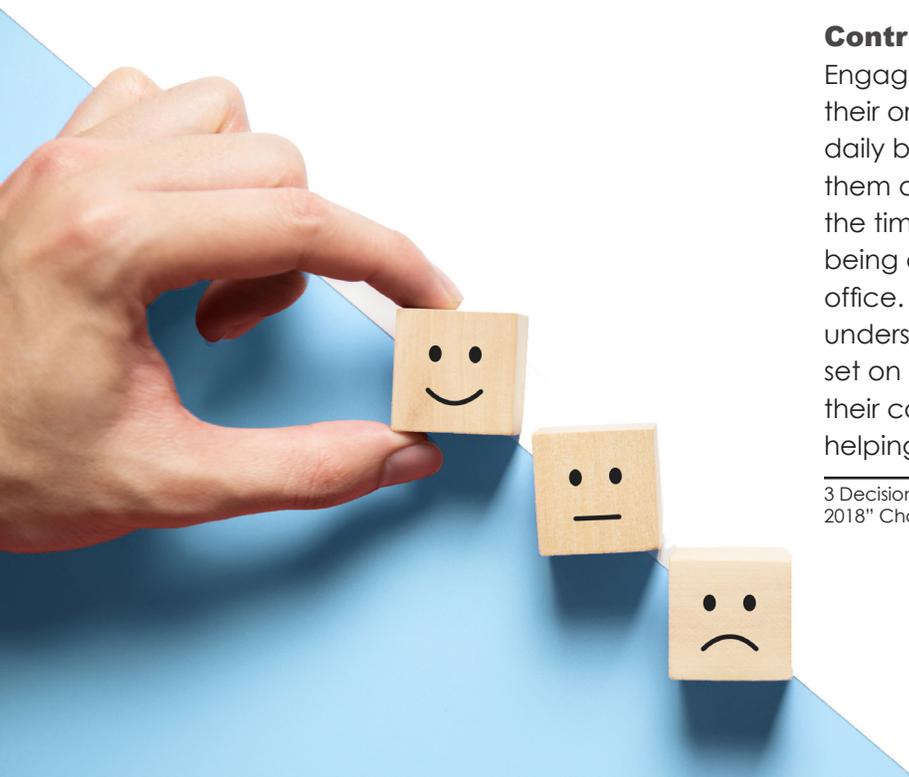
Entitlements

For employees to be engaged, they need to know precisely what's expected of them and what their job responsibilities are. They also need to be equipped with the tools and technologies that enable them to get their job done.

Contributions

Engaged employees are able to contribute to their organizations in a measurable way on a daily basis. Their managers often compliment them on a job well done. It's not all work all the time either; bosses care about the well-being of their workers, inside and outside of the office. Managers of engaged employees also understand that their workers have their sights set on moving forward at some point during their careers. To that end, they are interested in helping their employees advance.

³ Decision-wise.com "Employee Satisfaction v Employee Engagement 2018" Charles Rogel April 23, 2018



Community

Whereas satisfied employees might show up to work, ignore their colleagues, and listen to music on their headphones all day, engaged employees love the people they work with. Some of their coworkers are even considered their friends outside the office. Engaged employees feel as though they have a voice at their company. When they speak, people listen and respond. Engaged employees believe that the work they are doing is invaluable to their companies. If they were to start producing less, everyone would notice.

Growth

Engaged employees have adequate opportunities for professional development at their organizations. On one hand, that means the opportunity to attend symposiums, conferences, and trade shows as well as to be included on stretch assignments and projects outside their job description. On another, it means the ability to be promoted—or at least interview from a position that carries more responsibility.

Not just knowing the difference between satisfaction and engagement—but also our ability to measure it and understand it—can help managers and leaders focus on actions that will make meaningful differences to their teams. BWF's Engage Dx practice can develop and deliver tailored engagement surveys for your team, department or division. With that, we enjoy better performance, reduced turnover and higher retention. ■

Contact Us

BWF's team of professionals can help create strategies for effective talent management, provide training and tools to build stronger teams, and offer new programs that retain and facilitate in-house career growth for fundraising superstars. For more details, contact us at sales@bwf.com or 952-921-0111.



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