

# The CHOICE Connection

Positive strategies. Practical solutions.

constructive  
**CHOICE**  
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## September 2016 - In This Issue:

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## Quotable Quotes

*"Creating caring and robust connections between every employee and their work, customers, leaders, managers, and the organization to achieve results that matter to everyone in this sentence." ~ David Zinger*

*"There are only three measurements that tell you nearly everything you need to know about your organization's overall performance - employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and cash flow." ~ Jack Welch*

*"When people go to work, they shouldn't have to leave their hearts at home." ~ Betty Bender*

Dear Jean,

It's been said, you can have a satisfied employee who may not be fully engaged, and yet you will never have an engaged employee who is not fully satisfied. As I look back on my career and the jobs I have had, I can remember those jobs where I have been truly satisfied in my work and yet not so engaged. At those times, it felt like I was going through the motions required at work and at times wondering if I was making any headway in my career. My current work - which actually consists of multiple jobs - is a good picture of me being fully engaged and also very satisfied with my work. I do believe I am doing meaningful work. I have the flexibility of work, some travel and a chance to sharpen my skills for new challenges that seem to show up weekly. This past year has been an exciting one for me and it was my self-declared transition year. Yes, fully engaged and very much satisfied - so much so, I am still holding to the concept of reirement vs. retirement.

Wishing you also opportunities for more engagement at work and then joys of satisfying work,  
Jean

## Engagement and Employee Satisfaction

Employee engagement has become the new buzzword among organizations as they work with recruitment, hiring, employee development and employee retention challenges and opportunities.

Since the late 1990s, organizations have measured employee satisfaction and then attempted to use that data to improve the work environment for their employees and maintain or increase productivity. The Gallup organization began measuring this performance indicator and their index has shown that disengagement is increasing at a steady rate from 70% in their early studies to 87% (almost 9 out of 10) for employees worldwide. The financial toll to businesses equals \$450 to \$550 billion a year.



A report, "Employee Disengagement is a Disease: How Organizations Can Cure Today's Workplace Pandemic," published in July of this year notes that businesses focused in the past on the manager-employee relationships as key to employee engagement. Today, there is a new factor to consider - employees who now want to move to contemporary work styles and yet working in organizations who are still running their organizations with an 'old school' workplace mentality.

Take note of the 'old school' vs. 'contemporary workplace' factors that are reshaping those organizations focused on strengthening their employee engagement:

- working hours - 9-5 vs. flexible
- where employees work - in the office vs. anywhere there is an internet connection
- the number of hours - 40 hours/week vs. variable, as the workload demands
- business equipment - company-owned vs. greater choice; combination of company-owned and employee-owned
- work style - focus on the process and hierarchy vs. focus on achieving objectives and innovation
- communication style - one-way (presentations, email and memos) vs. two-way, collaborative

This phenomenon is no longer solely an HR concern. Business leaders throughout the organization play a vital role in working through the complexities to create a productive and engaged environment. In February 2016, the Harvard Business Review indicated that, "Leaders can solve this problem in two ways: by streamlining and redistributing responsibilities for collaboration and by rewarding effective contributions." Add to this connection to leadership, the need to have technology keep pace with changing work

environments where the employees have the right tools to get the job done and connect with their teams.

There is no one right solution for any organization to embrace. As with most challenges that organizations face, this opportunity to encourage engagement and satisfaction - fostering a positive alignment of their employees to the work and the company they work for requires stronger collaboration. Possibly the more important factors the organizations need to explore are the consequences of maintaining the status quo, the risks of a changing workforce dynamics in generational work styles and preferences and the impact to their productivity and potential to remain a viable business of the future.

A final and sobering thought comes from *Corporate Responsibility*, an article in PwC (February 2014) - "Employees who are committed to their organizations put in **57% more** effort on the job - and are **87% less** likely to resign - than the employees who consider themselves disengaged.

## **Tools and Resources FROM THE BOOKSHELF**

[JOLT - Engaged and On Target](#) (2006) by M. Pamela Doust, PhD and Evelyn I. Eubank.  
"Get more out of your own career and help your organization be more effective!"

[Louder than Words: Chapter 4 Communication - The Cornerstone of an Engaged Culture](#) by Bob Kelleher. FREE eBook - 10 Practical Employee Engagement Steps that Drive Results

## **THE INTERNET CONNECTIONS**

[Engagement - Always on](#) by David Brown, Josh Bersin, Will Gosling and Nathan Sloan (Feb 29, 2016). "Employee engagement and retention today means understanding an empowered workforce's desire for flexibility, creativity, and purpose. Under the evolving social contract between employer and employee, workers become "volunteers" to be reengaged and re-recruited each day."

[What is Employee Engagement?](#) by David McLeod. The Engaging for Success Report sets out findings of four common features of highly engaged and high performing organizations (the Four Enablers).

[2016 Report: Trends in Global Employee Engagement Highlights](#) - download the report.

[DecisionWise Engagement Survey](#) (download sample survey) Designed to measure overall engagement. It also measures the five MAGIC keys of employee engagement: Meaning, Autonomy, Growth, Impact, and Connection. Additional employee survey questions measure the factors that drive engagement and satisfaction in an organization.

## **Reflection**

The following information is from the company DecisionWise, Providing Leadership Intelligence(R) since 1996. They provide a download of a sample employee engagement

survey which also considers the need to measure employee satisfaction. Their questions below are key to beginning a reflection of our engagement and satisfaction in our jobs and careers. These are the same questions leaders can begin to answer as well.

### **5 MAGIC Keys of Employee Engagement** (this share from [www.decision-wise.com](http://www.decision-wise.com))

" ... we have found that there are five keys that drive employee engagement. We use one question as a direct measure and three supporting questions to measure each of the five MAGIC keys. This allows organizations to determine which of the five keys is driving or inhibiting engagement and understand how to take action to improve.

1. **Meaning:** Do employees find meaning and purpose in their jobs? Does their work make a difference for others?
2. **Autonomy:** Do employees have freedom, self-governance, and an ability to make choices about their work?
3. **Growth:** Does the job provide development and growth opportunities. Does the work challenge and stretch employees to grow and improve?
4. **Impact:** Do employees feel like they are successful in their work? Do they see that their effort makes a difference and contributes to the success of the organization?
5. **Connection:** Do employees have a personal connection with the people they work with, their boss, and the social community of the workplace?

### **Measuring Satisfaction...**

Remember, employees need to have their basic needs met or engagement will suffer. Many of the survey items measure concepts that impact employee satisfaction. Some of these items include:

1. I have received the training I need to do my job well.
2. I have the tools and resources I need to do my job well.
3. My supervisor treats people with fairness and respect.
4. My supervisor gives me regular feedback on how I am doing.
5. We work effectively across departments and functions.
6. This organization communicates well with all employees about what is going on.

## **Choose To**

Determine your level of engagement at your workplace ... is your work meaningful ... do you have choices ... does your job provide growth and development options ... do you feel successful at work ... are you connected with the people you work with? ... Also consider your level of satisfaction with your work ... have you received the training to do your job ... do you have the tools and resources to do your job ... are you treated with fairness and respect from your supervisor ... are you given regular feedback on your work ... your team(s) work effectively across departments and functions ... the organization communicates well and regularly so you know what is going on.



## **September Joyful Observances**

Be Kind to Editors and Writers Month  
Happy Cat Month  
International Self-Awareness Month  
[National Sewing Month](#)  
[Self-Improvement Month](#)

National Days of Prayer and Remembrance (September 9-11)  
Build a Better Image Week (September 18-24)  
National Keep Kids Creative Week (September 18-24)  
International Week of the Deaf (September 19-25)  
National Fall Foliage Week (September 27-October 3)

[International Day of Charity](#) (September 5)  
Swap Ideas Day (September 10)  
Google.com Day (September 15)  
Locate an Old Friend Day (September 17)  
[Love Note Day](#) (September 23)

## **Administrivia**

My Constructive Choices Audience...

- \* Professionals wanting to be at choice in their career and daily work,
- \* New managers (and aspiring leaders) transitioning to establish a leadership role in their communities,
- \* Individuals wanting to sort through the choices, build a more fulfilling life, live their voices, and...
- \* Coaches who choose to step out, show up, and say - YES, it IS all about YOU!

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