

Wake up the Sleep Walkers: Management Magic 4

In 2006 the Gallup Company surveyed one thousand employees across the nation regarding their 'level of engagement' in their work/company. The results were shocking. *The Gallup Company found that only 27% of all workers are actively engaged in their work'. 59% are 'sleepwalking' through their day and 14% are actually 'undermining' the company's efforts.* Wow! Can this be true in your company?

Let us suppose it is true, now what?

Clearly the 27% who are actively engaged are great contributors and need to be encouraged and supported in their work. So....make sure they are paid competitively, get the recognition they deserve and are given opportunities in your company.

The 14% who are undermining efforts need to go. Most likely it will take a tremendous effort to turn them around and it makes more economical sense to use your efforts to encourage them to find another job where they can be happier. If you don't know how to encourage poor performers to leave, get some help. It can be done.

But what about the 59% 'Sleep Walkers'? You can't release them all and you don't want to release all of them. What you really want to do is WAKE THEM UP! So how?

It's back to the basics:

First be sure each employee has clear goals for their work and that these goals are strongly linked to your business plan: the results you are trying to achieve. If you want to immediately engage employees, provide them with the business plan and ask them to develop goals for their own jobs. Then review the goals and make appropriate revisions *with* the employee.

Second, agree on the monitoring process for each goal. Then begin regular monthly reviews. At every review, ask the employee to first assess himself/herself. "Rate the progress on each specific goal". Now your task becomes one of adding to the evaluation or challenging the employee's view. Don't forget, "What is monitored is done."

Many times Sleep Walkers will wake up when they believe what they are doing is important and someone (You) is paying attention.

Third and very critical--- Follow-up! The follow-up begins at every review meeting with recognition and praise for accomplishments and redirection for missing the mark.

Praise and recognition does not need to be elaborate or cost money. A simple “Thank you for your hard work on...” will spur renewed dedication to the task. We know that attention is a most powerful motivator.....remember when someone complimented you on your new sport coat... you found yourself thinking, “Maybe I’ll check again at Dillard’s tomorrow,” right?

And even attention through redirection is motivating. Most employees want to perform well and when you clarify directions and standards, they will try to meet your expectations.

You may have machines stamping out widgets, but you have people operating those machines. And when those machines are finely tuned and well oiled, but the people are sleep walking, production suffers. And when the machines and the employees are both engaged, production soars. (Profits, too!)

It’s Always About People.