

THE “ROOTS” AND “FRUITS” OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

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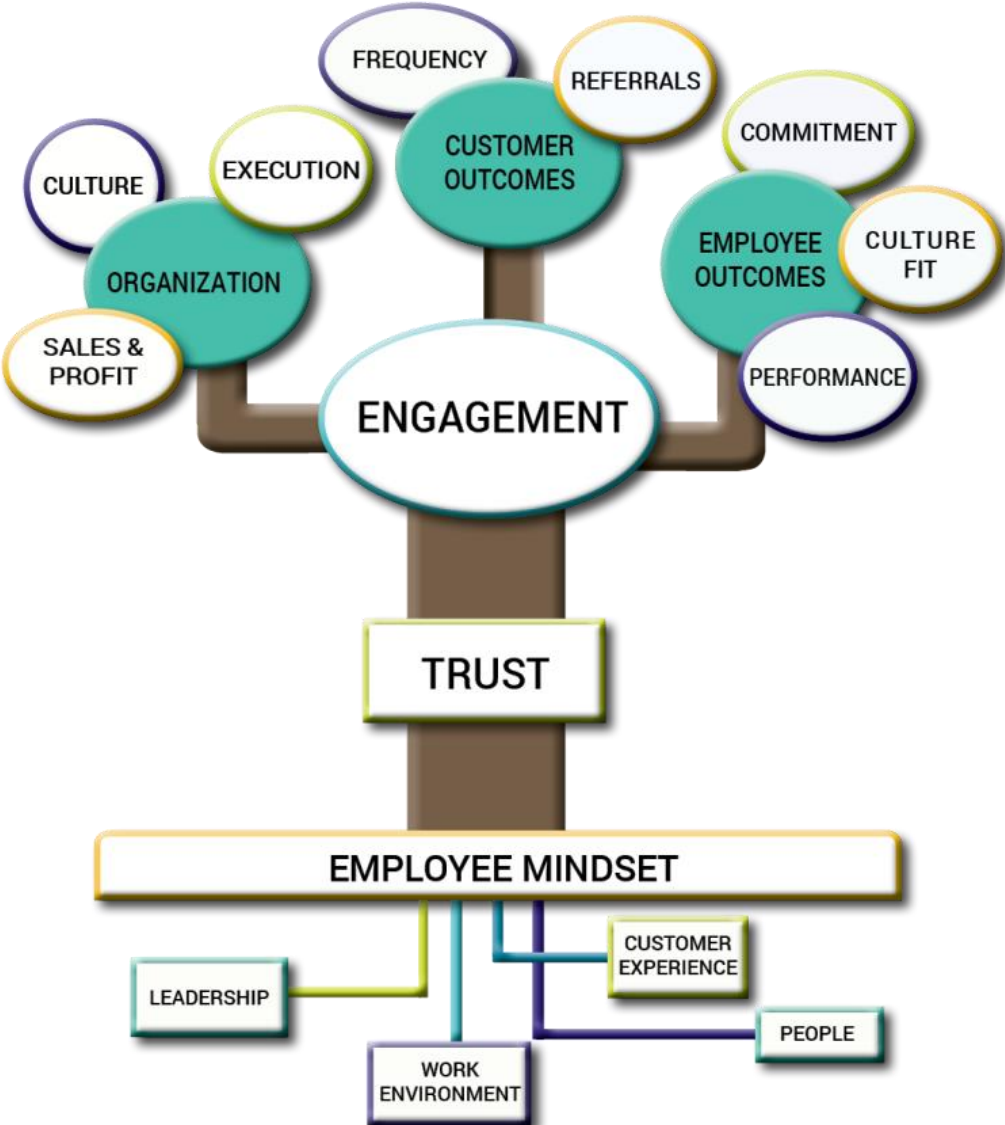


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It is no secret that many company leaders face the challenge of fostering engagement within their workforce. This is easier said than done because the key to engagement is not prescribed program, nor is it an inherent part of employees' experience. Rather, engagement is the result of their experience. The strong relationship between the level of employee engagement and organizational performance makes this distinction immensely important and raises the question of how to maximize engagement.

CULTIVATING A POSITIVE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

The Employee Experience and Results Tree™ shown below helps explain the relationship between employee experience and engagement. The Tree illustrates the path to an engaged workforce and the results that can be expected. It is a tool that helps company leaders understand the importance of engagement and ensure that there is agreement on the actions needed to develop and sustain an engaged workforce.



Like a tree, which is only as strong as its roots, the level of employee engagement within any organization is limited by the strength of the employee experience. The roots of the Tree represent four key environmental factors, directly controlled by a company, that define its employee experience:

- Nature of the *Work Environment*
- Quality of *Leadership*
- Quality of *People* (co-workers)
- Quality of the *Customer Experience*

As depicted in the model, these factors are the basis for the *Employee Mindset* - beliefs resulting from employees' experiences on the job. Employee Mindset is comprised of a sense of confidence, competence, pride and belonging, and perceptions of how well the organization satisfies employee needs. It is a fundamental precursor to the benefits, or "fruits," of a high quality employee experience. Employee Mindset determines the stability of the two major outcomes depicted as the Tree's "trunk": *Trust* and *Engagement*.

Trust emanates from employees' belief that the company will keep its promises to them - a matter of setting and meeting employee expectations. The level of Trust is also determined by the degree to which employees know that they can count on management and coworkers to do their jobs well, and believe that the organization allows them to use their best judgment to do their job without unnecessary supervision.

Engagement is the second outcome and occurs only when a company is trusted. Given the close relationships between the employee experience, trust and engagement, it is apparent that delivering a consistent employee experience is critical to ensuring a consistent customer experience.

Trust and Engagement in turn drive three areas of results: employee, customer and organizational. A tree with strong "roots" (Employee Experience), healthy "soil" (Employee Mindset) and a solid "trunk" (Trust and Engagement) will yield "fruit" (Results), for example:

- Employees who will perform at a high level, fit and contribute to the culture, and stay
- Customers who use the company's products and services frequently and refer the company to their friends and families
- Improved company top and bottom lines, brand value, repeat sales and profit

That's not a bad return for the amount of thought and effort required to create a positive mindset among employees – the faces, hearts and hands of your customer experience and brand – and it's attainable.

ENSURING "RETURN ON ENGAGEMENT"

What Leo Tolstoy said about families – *all happy families resemble one another* – is largely true of good places to work. There is a common core to healthy workplaces that is formed around leaders, co-workers, employee promises, the nature of the work environment and the quality of the customer experience.

The impact of the quality of co-workers on Employee Mindset is perfectly captured by the saying, “You can’t send eagles (great employees) to turkey school (a bad employee experience) and expect them to soar like eagles.” Great employees are uncomfortable in an environment of mediocrity, whether resulting from low-performing co-workers or a poor customer experience. Both directly affect employees’ pride in the place that they work and the work that they do. Anyone who has worked for companies with an unreliable customer experience can attest to the effects such an experience has on their own mindset. Following the path illustrated by the Tree shows that attaining desired results through people, both management and non-management, requires intentional alignment between the employee experience, trust and engagement – and the better the alignment, the more direct and predictable the path.

While the nature of the people you hire affects their propensity and willingness to engage, all of the other factors for improving the employee experience are controlled by the company. A tree could not flourish with meager roots or a weak trunk. Similarly, a complete and effective solution demands thorough assessment and analysis that can be guided by the Employee Experience and Results Tree™ and commitment by leaders to take specific and intentional actions that have the desired impact on the company’s employee experience.

ABOUT CORVIRTUS

Corvitus provides a range of innovative, science-based measurements and services that tie a company's culture and core values to talent processes. Corvitus solutions have enabled hundreds of companies to strengthen and scale their corporate cultures, and to identify, develop and retain those employees with the characteristics and capabilities essential for business success and customer satisfaction. For more information, visit www.corvitus.com, or schedule a demo by using this link:

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