

Breaking the Mould

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“Negative Circumstances You Can’t Control Lead To Stress. Negative Circumstances You Can Control Lead To Excitement.

England

It is the season for surveys on engagement, as if by asking whether you are engaged or not the surveyor will find out how to make you engaged. This month the survey comes from the CIPD. The results were showcased at their “Employee Engagement Conference” where they conclude, enigmatically, that **“Workers in the public sector are intellectually but not emotionally engaged.”**

These strange findings are no surprise coming from the same people who present the “Rewards and Recognition conference,” staunchly defending the discredited behaviourist view of human performance in the face of the emergent understanding of its destructive capability. Do the CIPD really not get it? <http://tiny.cc/eHvYD> Apparently not

There is a thread on the linked in HR Professionals group that defies belief. “Employee Engagement Activities.” We suggested that treating your employees with respect might be a good activity. Since then the thread has grown with increasingly bizarre suggestions for activities that would cause the workforce to engage, an interdepartmental Tug of War, a Potato Race, Three Legged Race and a Sack Race? Why didn’t we think of that?

The saving grace of this thread is a message from Ronald Soans, a trainer in India, who quotes Ken Blanchard’s “Eight Key Factors for Influencing Employee Passion”. • **Meaningful work • Collaboration • Fairness • Autonomy • Recognition • Growth • Connectedness with leader • Connectedness with Colleagues.** For fuller definitions follow the link to the thread. We are not aware that Ken knows how to create this environment but knowing what it looks like is a step in the right direction. <http://tiny.cc/XKVvO>

Helen Thompson on the Training Zone asked for some notes on ownership to create a workshop for call centre workers. We explained to her that the BtM notes were normally delivered to managers as the workforce have no problem at all understanding what ownership is. It is the managers who have no idea what it is and are therefore incapable of understanding what they have to do to allow the workforce to take it. It was the call centre managers who asked Helen to deliver the workshop so she will be expected to adhere to the management belief that there is something that can be done to the workforce to make them take ownership. The success of her workshop will be judged on how much ownership she can make the workforce take

Bob Nelson, *Keeping Up In A Down Economy* by the very people who don’t know what it is. We do not envy her task.

India

This month sees the launch of “Project Why” in Cranfield The event will be on March 6th 1900hrs at the Cross Keys Pub, High St Cranfield. We will be asking the simple question, “What can we do to establish a long term future for this project. Anybody who can make it will be most welcome. www.projectwhy.org

North America

April DeGideo, who is Editor-in-Chief at Progressive Business Publications in New York, a bimonthly publication for managers and supervisors, read our comments on the question “Is Employee Satisfaction Impossible?” and has asked if she can quote those comments. We of course agreed but she was also looking for specific advice on how to deal with conflict and low moral. We suggested that by understanding that both are seldom present in new hires she needs to look for what is happening to the workforce while they are at work that is causing these problems, then by getting rid of the behaviour that is causing these problems they will disappear. We did hint about whose behaviour it is that causes these problems.

The Employee Engagement Network is a rich source of discussion about engagement but it appears to suffer from reliability problems. If the site is up the links will work. Katie Wilson asked the question on the Employee Engagement Network, “How much talk is too much? She had been tasked with telling her workforce to engage and was justifiably nervous about what to tell them, feeling instinctively that telling them to engage was the wrong thing to do. All the other posts were about the value of good communication so we suggested that what she really needed to do was to start walking the talk. The more she told the workforce to engage the more they would resist so we suggested that she say no more and simply start behaving in the way that would allow them to engage. <http://tiny.cc/0sw33>

Selby’s Page www.breakingthemould.co.uk

There have been a number of entries onto Selby’s page this month, the best has got to be between “Two French Paratroopers”. <http://tiny.cc/JvZx1> , And “Anger Management” <http://tiny.cc/iCVeB> . Both Brilliant, Thanks Selby.