

Ten Steps to Building Employee Engagement

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by Irene Becker

Guest Post on Switch and Switch & Shift
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*Helping smart people and organizations communicate and lead
forward smarter, faster and happier*



You have the right people on the bus, but how do you keep them engaged? Here are ten simple but powerful steps:

Step 1. Make engagement your mantra

Employee engagement, engagement of colleagues and peers, engagement of constituents and stakeholders, engagement of clients and communities, social/digital engagement will make or break your bottom line. You may be able to make a quick buck without engagement, but turning that buck into many bucks, developing an organization that will survive and thrive means building a me to we culture.

Step 2. Get Social

Develop one to one, one to group, virtual and social/digital relationships that stick. The greatest business idea, product or service will not grow, evolve and produce results without human intervention, interaction and collaboration. Innovation and engagement are collaborative. Your people, your employees, colleagues, vendors, stakeholders and the community and large will pave the way for your success or failure.

Step 3. Listen, and listen more

Listen for words, actions, pauses, cues that will tell you what is going on beneath the surface. Develop higher emotional intelligence; improve your self-awareness and awareness of others. Learn to pick up social, cultural, personal, verbal cues that tell you what is important to your audience and use and model these cues to create engagement and build rapport.

Step 4. Go for the gold

Remember the golden rule. Strong relationships are built on shared values, integrity and transparent communication. There is no room for error in a digital world, no room for verbal or written duplicity. Transforming potential into results, challenges into innovative solutions demands a higher degree of engagement, integrity and transparency of communication than ever before.

Step 5. Care first

communicate second because you cannot make a fire with wet wood. USE care-frontation, not confrontation. Develop new ways, a better style of communication that will build a bridge between what is and what can be. Build a clear fence around expected and acceptable, make sure that goals, objectives and expectation are crystal clear, but do it with care-frontation.

Step 6. Fail forward faster and better

When errors occur, fail forward. Admit there has been a failure in and learn to use this failure to drive collaboration and engagement by focusing on the shared objective and how you will work together with mutual respect to attain it. Start training yourself and others to become solution focused, by using errors and challenges that have come to innovate and create better and stronger solutions. Fail forward, faster and better.

Step 7. Take every opportunity to reinforce the foundation of your house

Walk your talk, talk your walk. Take every opportunity to use shared values, objectives and integrity of communication and action to build a ME to WE culture. Embrace and applaud great work, develop new ways to help others fail forward, and get rid of the few bad apples whose values, objectives and integrity are out of sync.

Step 8. Learn and play forward

Make time for learning, embrace and applaud learning opportunities while also taking time to engage in activities that create down time, humor time, fun time; activities that not only drive greater rapport but will also enhance creativity and ideation. Put a healthy dose of learning and fun into all your communication. Set the tone, and tone it up. Negativity will breed more negativity. Fear puts human beings into fight or flight, neither of which drive engagement, empowerment or results.

Step 9. Generate Enthusiasm.

You cannot make a fire from wet wood. Engagement means empowering the others to feel that they can do their best,

that they have a valuable contribution to make, and that if they have failed they will use the experience to learn and fail forward. Recognize accomplishments; redirect failure so that people feel free to fail forward. Empower, engage and repeat.

Step 10. Feed hearts.

Make learning, growing and giving REAL. Find new ways to reach out and serve the community at large. Motivate and inspire not only those you employ but all constituents to be part of a greater goal that speaks to contribution and purpose. Show those you lead and serve that you care, and help them care back.



First woman CEO of a steel company in Canada, Irene Becker has a track record of trailblazing accomplishments in business and in the community at large. Irene is an inspiring executive coach, speaker and writer whose R-E-A-C-H methodology and 3Q focus has helped clients achieve breakthrough results in their careers, communication, leadership and lives. Passionate about

the integrity of her work, Irene is dedicated to helping change-makers LEAD forward at the speed of change.

For more information on Irene and the services she offers, visit Just Coach It – | The 3Q Edge™ . Follow her on Twitter @justcoachit. Watch this video interview of Irene Becker, where she talks about leading forward at the speed of change...or just do it. Call Irene @ 416-671-4726 Skype Irene beckerirene. She goes the distance for clients face to face, by telephone and virtually.

Business Plan Basics & 5 Biz Links

Best Practice Business Basics

1 Post and 5 Best Business Links

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Sometimes it is good to just get back to basics! Here are some basics for entrepreneurs who want to develop a business plan that is simple, relevant and understandable! Your business plan should be made up of ten different areas that guide your forward:

- **Customers** – Understanding the different types of customers we serve-customer segmentation
- **A Strong Value Proposition** – Our formula for solving customer problems and satisfying needs with products/services
- **Marketing, Sales & Distribution Channels** where we deliver our value proposition (product-services) to customers in the most effective way possible.
- **Relationship Development and Maintenance.** Developing strong relationships with are established and maintained with each customer segment
- **Revenue Streams** from goods-services sold to customers
- **Key Resources or Assets-** The things, people required to effectively deliver our deliver products/services
- **Key Activities-** What we must do to effectively deliver products/services
- **Key Partnerships** alliances acquired outside the company to successfully deliver goods-services

- **Cost Structure**-elements that make up and result in the cost of our services/products and profits.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation** of our Business Model to remain relevant in a high change, highly competitive marketplace

A business plan that works will guide you forward, because it is:

1. Customer Centric. It will defines who we are serving by answering the following questions:

- For whom are we creating value?
- Who are our most important customers? How will our customers be segmented?
- What do they want and what are they willing to pay for?

2. Compelling and relevant. It has a strong value proposition that answers the following questions:

- What bundle of products/services creates value for each specific customer segment?
- What problem/customer want are we satisfying?
- What benefits, features are we offering?
- Is our value proposition innovative, new or disruptive?
- What are the quantifiers (price, speed of service etc)
- What are the qualifiers (design, customer experience)

3. Market Focused. It shows us how we can market, sell and deliver our products/services by direct and/or indirect channels. It will answer the following questions:

- How do we reach our customer segments and deliver our value proposition?
- What is our company's interface or touch points with

customers?

- How do we provide them with a unique customer experience?
- How do we raise awareness for our products/services and deliver our value proposition?
- How do we help clients evaluate and choose our value proposition?
- How will we develop a strong brand?
- How will we monitor and evaluate our value proposition
- How will we delivery products/services to our clients (web, direct sales, alliances, stores and retail outlets, partners, distributors)
- What is our after sales strategy to provide post purchase support, excellent service and value.

4. Relationship Centric. It helps us build and maintain relationships.

A good business plan defines the types of relationships we establish with each customer segment (personal, automated, client acquisition, retention, up selling). It also tells us how we will maintain and grow/expand customer relationships.

5. Focused on Generation of Profit-Multiple Revenue Streams and answers the following questions:

- What do our customers want, and what will they be willing to pay for our services/products?
- What is the value they are paying for-What are they getting?
- What is our price structure (fixed pricing, bargaining, market dependent, volume dependent)
- Are our revenues streams one time purchases or recurring purchases?
- How much does each revenue stream contribute to overall revenues? (Product/service sales, usage fees, subscription fees, lending-renting-leasing fees,

licensing fees, brokerage fees)

- What are our pricing mechanisms: Fixed, dynamic, negotiation-bargaining, market dependent, volume dependent, yield dependent (dependent on our inventory at time of sale), customer segment depend

6. Focused on Revenue Streams- Identification of Activities that Generate Profits

The most important things the business must do to make it work and generate profits. The activities that help the company create and offer a strong value proposition, reach markets, maintain relationships, problem solve, earn revenues.

- **Production** (designing, making and delivering products/services)
- **Problem Solving** (solving customer problems, training, knowledge management)
- **A Strong Platform** (services/products, technical network-digital-web that is managed, serviced and promoted).

7. Identifies Key Resources and Assets – Owned, Leased or Shared.

- **Physical Resources:** mfg facilities, buildings, vehicles, machines, sales systems, distribution networks.
- **Intellectual Resources:** Brands, proprietary knowledge, patents and copyrights, partnerships, customer databases
- **Human Resources:** People who bring knowledge, innovation, creativity, management, sales, marketing, administration, leadership to the company
- **Financial Resources:** Cash, lines of credit, loans, stock options

8. Identifies Partners and Suppliers

Success is not achieved alone, the development of partnerships is more critical than ever before because it will help us optimize resources and activities, reduce costs, reduce risk.

- **Who are our key partners?**
- **Who are our key suppliers?**
- **What key resources are we getting from partners?**
- **What key activities do partners perform? What Key activities do we perform?**

9. Has a Good Cost Structure

Your cost structure must describe all costs incurred. Costs for creating and delivering value, maintaining customer relationships, generating revenues must allow us to minimize expenses and achieve revenue targets and goals. Cost Driven costs are costs incurred to minimize expenses. Value Drive Costs are incurred to create value for our clients/business.

Categories of Costs-Fixed & Variable: Fixed costs remain the same despite volume, good or production (salaries, rent, and mfg costs). Variable Costs: Variable costs change with the volume of goods or services produced.

Economies of Scale: Cost Advantages as output increases in terms of lower purchasing costs, driving the cost of average unit of product/service down

Economies of Scope: Cost advantages due to a larger operation serving more clients and stronger marketing, sales, distribution challenges and multiple product/service lines.

10. Includes Evaluation and Monitoring of the Plan: It is critical to have a system that will allow you to measure, compare and evaluate business results on a regular and timely basis. There are six steps in the evaluation and monitoring process:

Identify Objectives	–	Identify Standards & Criteria	–	Collect Evidence	–	Analyze Data	–	Compare Results with Objectives	–	Evaluate & Develop Action Plan
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More on Best Practice Business Basics? You Betcha!

Consulting Success Tips by Seth Godin

Are YOU Leaving Business on the Table?

Finding New Sources of Profitable Growth

The Thriving Organization

The Agile Management and Leadership Toolkit

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Irene Becker, Chief Success Officer, Just Coach It–The 3Q Edge™ | Reach-Resonance-Results Toronto and Virtually Everywhere | Face-Face, By Tel, Skype or Video Conferencing

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True Happiness - Transformational Joy

**TRUE HAPPINESS -
TRANSFORMATIONAL JOY**

What is it? Where do YOU find it?

**One very short post, 10 links AND a bonus
exercise**

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***Helping smart people and organizations communicate and lead
forward smarter, faster and happier is what I do best***



Momentary happiness is born of doing, achieving and acquiring. It is what we are sold in advertisements, and it is what most of us have unfortunately been socialized to want. It is the easy ticket, the quick ride to temporary pleasure. It is the poison apple that will never lead us to a place of sustainable satisfaction, but down the garden path of unfulfilled desire. The more we consume momentary joy, the more we want as we move forward craving the next quick fix in

satisfaction.

Transformational joy, on the other hand, cannot be learned, bought, sold or acquired. It is not trendy, or time bound. Transformational joy is the essence of all that we are and all that we can ever be. It is love. It is everlasting and allows us to live each moment, each day without fear. It is not found in solitude, self pity or solace. It is found in giving and sharing in reaching out to another person, it is found in reclaiming the values that really matter to us. It is found in living our truth. **Truth that is found not in what we take, but in what we share.** Happiness, transformational joy that is found in what we contribute; in knowing that we are one people sharing one earth. Together we can growth, prosper and flourish. Divided we will fall.

This week I challenge you to let go of what you think you want and to reflect upon what you truly need. I challenge you to cast fear to the wind and embrace love, and in so doing to start each day asking not what can I get today, but what can I learn, share and contribute. Our greatest hope, our greatest power lies within.

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BONUS EXERCISE: The Pause

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