

WORKPLACE TRENDS That Will Affect Your 2015 Employee Engagement Strategy

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The world is changing...

The world is changing. The global GDP is declining in advanced economies and increasing in emerging markets, signifying significant shifts in the global marketplace over the next ten years. By 2016, it is predicted that this gap will be even wider, with more than 52% of the GDP coming from developing economies and emerging markets.

Trends

As we look toward 2015, here are what *Forbes* & *US News & World Reports* observe as developing workplace trends:

- 1 Millennials Invade:** Millennials (those in their 20s and early 30s) make up roughly 36% of your workforce. By 2025, that number will climb to 75%.
- 2 Going Global:** Your workforce is now worldwide. Behaviors need to be changed to address global teams and maintain culture across all continents.
- 3 Talent Wars:** The war for talent is real. If you don't have a strategy in place, you are someone else's leverage. Between 70 – 84% of employees are currently hunting.
- 4 Talent Development:** Talent development remains key to retention. The best are investing in building and retaining their existing talent. The companies failing to do so are becoming irrelevant.
- 5 Focused on Wellness:** Health care costs are projected to increase 6.7% to equal \$11,176 per employee. Healthy employees are more productive and present but also live better lives outside of work.
- 6 Employees Gain Power:** Loyalty as we once knew it is over. The employer will no longer define the workplace – employees' priorities and preferences will dictate what the future workplace looks like.

To add to these very real trends, the number of employees still engaged after their first six months on the job is roughly 40%. What are you doing for the other 60%?

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Best Practices

You can't rely on 20th-century strategies for 21st-century challenges. Work has changed and the rules have changed. Here are some evidenced-based best practices to drive engagement:

- 1** Make work meaningful and create work that is challenging and stretches employees.
- 2** Help people feel valued. Re-establish trust through a relational currency.
- 3** Make sure leaders and managers are experienced at being supportive.

- 4 Provide authentic recognition with purpose.
- 5 Make sure one of your strategies focuses on growth and development support.
- 6 Create an environment that links performance to company values and behaviors. This becomes a powerful lever to attract and retain your talent.

Implementing a core strategy around these best practices explains 50% of the ROI for engagement. These practices are critical areas that will demand attention and action.

Taking Action

How can your employee engagement and recognition strategy influence the workplace trends for 2014 through 2015?

Here are six key actions you can take:

- 1 **Ask the right questions:** Make sure you're harnessing what you think you are measuring. Like the wind, we cannot see engagement but we know it's there. If you do not measure engagement correctly, who knows what you're capturing.
- 2 **Consider state vs. trait:** Be clear on how you identify engagement. While some characteristics may predispose a person to be engaged more easily, defining engagement as a trait is a slippery slope.
- 3 **Know the difference between principle vs. practice:** It's not as easy as looking like a cool place to work. Free food and scooters won't overcome a culture that is not transparent and fair.
- 4 **Remove unproductive leaders:** These are the leaders who obstruct the path of progress and generally disrespect their employees. Between 28 – 36% of US employees work with a leader whose approach could be described as dysfunctional.
- 5 **Go where the Millennials are:** Social recognition is important and the ability for the Millennials to share recognition is important. Does your technology offer this as an option? Having the ability to acknowledge coworkers using a tablet or smartphone is a trend that's becoming the norm. Does your technology offer the ability to send recognition where the employees work regardless of country, language and environment?
- 6 **Realize that middle-managers are critical:** Pay attention to middle managers. While top leaders matter, managers affect the day to day employee experience.

At the end of the day, engagement happens in an infinite number of steps – it calls for us to treat as important many things we might think of as incidental.

BIWORLDWIDE is a global leader in employee recognition programs. We use the latest technology and behavioral economics theories to create programs that help organizations meet their business goals.

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