

Employee Engagement Communications

PSG continues to focus on employee engagement since high employee engagement has extremely high correlation with performance, productivity and therefore profitability. Performance and productivity are a cornerstone of our practice with these surveys an essential diagnostic tool.

Stan Friedman, leveraging over thirty years of communications experience, has actively participated in major PSG international projects, focusing on organizational development and communication issues. He follows up on our previous article on employee engagement (July 2010 issue) with some tips on assessing organizational communications in this area.

In the [July 2010 PSG News Update](#), we talked about the need to measure employee engagement sooner rather than later. So what should you do if you find your scores are less than stellar? One action item should be to examine your communications strategy. Employees want to be certain of their focus, feel informed and included, know that they're engaged in meaningful work and want leaders they can trust. The communications they receive directly impact those requisites.

We would suggest five questions - there are obviously more - that should be used as litmus tests against your communications efforts to foster engagement:

- **Do employees understand your business strategy?** Understanding the business strategy and the reasons behind it helps employees connect the dots and explain why things happen. Senior leadership should be the apostles of the strategy, bringing it to life with passion and conviction at every opportunity.
- **Do employees have line of sight?** Employees need to know how their work unit and the work they do contribute to business performance, and can influence it. The higher up in the organization you go, the longer the line of sight can be. Customize communications with messages and local context for different target audiences and involve the right leaders in your formal and informal communication actions.
- **Are your communications open and timely?** In today's age of social media, leaders need to be as "loud" and as clear as possible otherwise they risk losing control of the message. Not communicating or communicating late is almost never a good idea. Whenever possible, inform managers first so they can internalize leadership decisions and translate the impact in ways rank-and-file employees can understand.
- **Are you demonstrating that you are listening?** Every communication channel in an organization should have a feedback mechanism. For employees to be truly engaged, they must be able to raise suggestions and concerns, and know they will be heard. Leaders also need to demonstrate their response to feedback.
- **Are you celebrating success?** Communicating a sense of community and shared accomplishment, both financial and non-financial, creates an emotional connection to the organization and higher employee engagement, typically reflected in their willingness to commit their full energy to their work. Use internal media to deliver localized content and let employees tell their own stories.