



# To Engage or Not To Engage...



That is the question. Employee engagement is a hot topic right now because leaders are realizing just how much the lack of engagement is affecting their bottom line. According to the latest research from Gallup, it's costing businesses \$450 - \$550 billion annually in lost productivity—and that is only in the US. Over 70% of employees are not engaged and these figures are consistent around the world.

I have spent the last year and a half researching engagement in companies, trying to figure out why some companies are doing well, growing, expanding, and their employees seem really happy and engaged while most others seem to be struggling. I wanted to figure out why that was.

Engage is a word of French origin from 15th century: "en gage", which means "to make a pledge". When we tried to find a good definition of engage with regards to the workplace, none of them encompassed the full essence of what we believe engagement means. So I came up with another one:

***Engage: to have full attention, commitment, enthusiasm, passion, and purpose for your work, to be wholeheartedly involved in and contribute positively to an organization.***

What we discovered in looking at companies like TOMS, Virgin, Zappos, PUMA, and Southwest Airlines (among many others) is that they are putting their people first.

The focus has shifted from profit driven to people development.

This does not mean that they are not concerned about making a profit—quite the opposite. They understand that when they have engaged employees that love their work, they are taking good care of their customers, and that makes them even more profitable in the long run.

In an era where the corporate world has treated employees as numbers, cutting costs through layoffs while the management takes home big bonuses, the lack of trust in corporations has plummeted. There is no loyalty or engagement when corporate cultures are driven by fear and control...and it is not a sustainable model. We are seeing businesses struggling not only because of the external market conditions but also largely in part because of the lack of engagement. The research is now showing the root cause, not just the symptoms.

It's time to find a new way of doing business.

Which is why we are so excited to share some of the Most Amazing Companies on this planet right now.

