

Employee Engagement – A Key To Your Success



A huge difference can be made by an organisation to its working environment, and ultimately turnover and profits, by developing an effective relationship with its employees through "engagement".

So what does "engaged" mean?

◆ **Engaged** employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organisation forward.

◆ **Not-Engaged** employees are indifferent in their attitude. They are putting in time, but not enough energy or passion into their work.

◆ **Actively Disengaged** employees aren't just unhappy at work; they're busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers undermine what their co-workers accomplish.

The best performing companies know that an employee engagement strategy linked to the achievement of business goals will help them win in the marketplace.

For most of us it is about being valued in an organisation. So how can you ensure your employees are valued in your business?

Gallup research of over 400 companies simplified their findings to 12 key questions:

1. Do you know what is expected of you at work?
2. Do you have the materials and equipment to do your work right?
3. At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
7. At work, do your opinions seem to count?



8. Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
9. Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
10. Do you have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
12. In the last year, have you had opportunities to learn and grow?

What answers would **you** get if you asked **your** employees these 12 questions?

Why Hire A Virtual Assistant?

Virtual Assistants, or VAs, are the unsung heroes of the internet era. Behind every successful business one should be able to find a competent VA, who helps to keep things organized not only in the virtual workplace, but also in other areas.

While entrepreneurship is a rewarding thing because you get to reap the profits of the business all for yourself, the usual challenges that plague every business person has to be borne by him alone as well - from the smaller, more mundane issues to the bigger, more serious problems.

You can always delegate the less delicate parts of the business to someone else. Hiring a VA would be the perfect solution.

But why a Virtual Assistant, and what makes a VA better than an ordinary assistant?

- Most VAs are business people too, and are totally unlike the common employee. Their expertise can be attributed to the number of years they have spent honing their skills, online and offline.

Some VAs have previously worked in the corporate field, and quite a few have even held high-level positions such as manager and director. They know what it takes to run an enterprise and understand the needs of other business owners.

- VAs are essentially experts in their field, so while a learning curve can be expected, training is not necessary. Their previous experience allows them to easily adapt to the new virtual environment.

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Selling Into Export Markets



Occasionally you come across a business that reminds you of what it takes to be successful. Here was an export business that was selling process control instrumentation into a well defined global niche market.

Selling was done by a UK-based sales engineer who had intimate knowledge of his market place, and with a market-leading technology, the company had been able to price its products to make a handsome profit.

Support costs were low and the products were made entirely in the UK. What more could a government want a tax-paying export-led business that created employment in the UK!

Many different ways of selling into export markets

However, for most businesses, growing an export business is not going to be quite that straightforward.

A product that someone wants; selling it to them; shipping it; getting paid; low aftercare costs; and making a profit in principle doing business overseas is the same as doing business at home, but it is certainly more complex, and it is the complexity that adds cost and increases business risk.

How you deal with overseas clients is key

Fundamentally it is how you access and deal with the overseas clients themselves that will determine the success or failure of your export venture, and that will depend on the territory, your product, its addressable market, your target sales volume, and the level of expertise required.

Export sales channels

Thus you will be faced with a number of options for each territory you decide to exploit. Here is a brief list of some of the alternatives:

◆ *E-commerce*: mostly for low-value commodity sales supported by web-based marketing;

◆ *Telephone/fax/email*: for sales of low-to-medium value commodities, services and configured products;

◆ *UK-based Sales executives*: for items such as high-value engineering products, specialist niche products and software development contracts, sold through sales visits to clients' premises;

◆ *Agents*: commission-based lead generators and often sales representatives, usually for low-to medium volume, high-value goods into territories with significant sales;

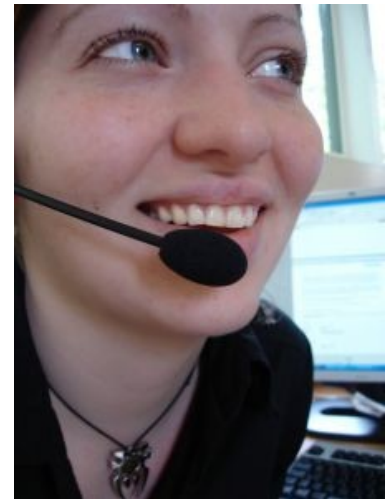
◆ *Distributors/Re-sellers*: buy and re-sell your products, usually as part of a portfolio of related products into a specific market; and

◆ *Overseas offices*: replacing distributors, agents or UK based sales executives, where setting up a local office either reduces the cost of selling into a territory and/or enables you to manage better important key accounts.

And as you grow your export business, you'll probably end up with a mix of channels in different territories depending on local factors, whilst ensuring that each one is contributing to profit.

Why Hire A Virtual Assistant?

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• Due to the nature of their work, VAs have more and better access to quality resources and additional manpower whenever the need arises.

• VAs are not employees, but contracted professionals. In essence, they are paid per task fulfilled, and idle moments or time dealing with personal affairs such as coffee breaks or trips to the water cooler are not compensated. Benefits generally associated with regular workers such as health insurance, vacation leaves or severance pay are not required.

• Because VAs work remotely, it isn't necessary to set up an office and buy furniture or additional equipment. VAs make use of their own tools.

To summarise, VAs go above and beyond what an ordinary assistant can do. They can handle both business and personal concerns, and frequently do so more capably and more effectively. There are less hassles in hiring and maintaining a VA than a regular assistant. Because of this, a business person is able to focus more on making his business grow than on dealing with issues on how to run it effectively.

Put plainly, VAs are cost-effective and time-saving.



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