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Focus

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Managers Make the Difference

Here's the bad news from Gallup's 2012 employee engagement survey: only 30% of American workers are actively engaged at work.

Jim Clifton, Chairman and CEO of Gallup, wrote recently that managers are the key to improving employee engagement. (*State of the American Workplace, 2013*, <http://www.gallup.com/strategicconsulting/163007/state-american-workplace.aspx>). Gallup has researched employee engagement for years, and reports that employee engagement "has a greater impact on performance than corporate policies and perks." No surprise here; we've known for decades that an employee's direct supervisor has the greatest impact on employee job performance and satisfaction. Paraphrasing Gallup's Mr. Clifton: fix the management problem and you fix the engagement deficit.

Engaged employees increase company profits, attract other great employees to the business, have lower accident and absenteeism rates, and are easier to manage. So, aside from firing the really bad ones, leaders need to train managers how to be more effective supervisors.

By the way, this is not a recent problem. For me, 2007 seemed to be an especially active year for advice on this subject because I wrote two Focus articles on related topics, both of which have specific recommendations on employee engagement. Navigate to <http://www.wagnercg.com/FocusArchives.aspx> and see the February 2007 and September 2007 articles.

Giving people more freedom in how they get results unleashes creativity and the passion of the human spirit. Let your over-cautious competitors have all the drones, while you attract the best and brightest employees.



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Engagement Step 1: Recognize, Report, and Reward Achievement

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