



People Matter

Leveraging Corporate Culture to
Capture Competitive Advantage™

125 Employee Engagement Practices

This list, shared in the keynote presentation *People Matter*, is for managers seeking practices that impact performance, motivation, loyalty, morale, team work, creativity, relationships—all affected by employee engagement. Engagement is not about fluff, phoniness, or falsehoods. It is real. It matters. It is free. Managers who employ the practices listed here are among the most successful in the country, and so are their companies. Usage suggestions for this list are on page 5.

- 1 Greet employees on your way in to work.
- 2 Use employee names in person and in meetings.
- 3 Say "thank you" as a common courtesy.
- 4 Speak to employees in passing, on elevators, in halls.
- 5 Make eye contact when employee is speaking.
- 6 Be inclusive of people around you.
- 7 Do not exclude people because of ego--yours or theirs.
- 8 Welcome people who stop by your office.
- 9 Support volunteer efforts with time off.
- 10 Support charity involvement with donations to employees' favorite causes.
- 11 Push decision-making as close to customers as possible.
- 12 Give feedback to employee ideas and suggestions.
- 13 Identify what makes your people tick, and give it to them.
- 14 Ask for employee feedback on management practices.
- 15 Ask for employee feedback on customer service practices.
- 16 Ask for employee ideas on service improvements.
- 17 Let them be right. Don't nit-pick minor issues.
- 18 Let them resolve customer issues without having to ask for permission.
- 19 Ask about their families--take genuine interest in people.
- 20 Keep the office clean and updated, don't let it get run-down.
- 21 Give employees workspace based on need, not title.
- 22 Hire people who like working in a place like yours.
- 23 Work with people on their career path and respect their ambitions.
- 24 Encourage continuing education, through financial or other support (i.e. time).
- 25 Challenge employees to tackle issues facing the company.
- 26 Challenge employees to tackle issues facing your customers.
- 27 Acknowledge progress.
- 28 Acknowledge improvements.
- 29 Acknowledge overcoming adversity.
- 30 Begin and end meetings on time.



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- 31 When work is submitted on time, review it in a timely manner.
- 32 Keep meetings you set up with employees. Cancelling, especially repeatedly, is disrespectful.
- 33 Give new employees an explanation of the Mission and company history.
- 34 Give new employees an explanation of the culture and preferred work behaviors.
- 35 Give new employees an explanation of how their jobs fit within the rest of the company.
- 36 Make sure all employees know why their jobs matter.
- 37 Act like all employees' jobs matter.
- 38 Switch places with front-line employees to learn the precise nature of customer relations.
- 39 Include employees from all areas and levels on corporate culture teams.
- 40 Rotate people on the culture teams every 12 to 18 months.
- 41 Give managers training, especially if they went from being top performers to being managers.
- 42 Give employees feedback on their work--regularly! Annual reviews are not enough.
- 43 Conduct requisite annual reviews on time. Delays show disrespect for the people and process.
- 44 Be on a first-name basis with employees at all levels.
- 45 Ensure employees have the right systems to do their jobs (i.e. Office 1998 is outdated!).
- 46 Discipline or punish rule offenders rather than punish all for one person's violation.
- 47 If you have something to say, say it directly to the employee.
- 48 Send congratulatory notes to coworkers and employees.
- 49 Conduct post-project reviews to identify process improvements to use now or next time.
- 50 Keep executive and management salaries below industry average.
- 51 Minimize the disparity between entry-level wages and executive salaries.
- 52 Inform employees at all levels of the company's financial performance and goals.
- 53 Communicate financial performance in a way all employees will understand.
- 54 Admit to mistakes.
- 55 Do not slam your office door, ever.
- 56 Know the difference between feedback, discipline, and humiliation. Only two are appropriate.
- 57 Do not complain about personal finances, especially if you make more money than others.
- 58 Keep your opinion about peers and executives to yourself--or to them directly.
- 59 Do not gossip about people on your team. Ever.
- 60 Do not disparage people on your team. Ever, even when they don't work there any more.
- 61 Help people fulfill their personal goals.
- 62 Be energetic. Don't expect those around you to give you energy.
- 63 Be engaged in your work. If you are disengaged, people around you will know and follow.
- 64 Be kind.
- 65 Show compassion when life-altering situations arise for people.
- 66 Sometimes it is okay, even wise, to break the rules for people. Go ahead.
- 67 Ensure people know the impact their work has on performance for the business and customers.



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- 68 Establish employee master mind groups for the frequent exchange of ideas.
- 69 Create a Culture Club to keep their eyes on the corporate culture.
- 70 Do what you say you will do. Always.
- 71 If you expect certain behaviors, exhibit them yourself.
- 72 Be on time for everything. Your tardiness inspires it in others.
- 73 Take the long way around the office to your next meeting and greet people along the way.
- 74 Get out of your ruts or routines.
- 75 Encourage employees to get fresh air outside during the day.
- 76 Brag about the good folks on your team.
- 77 Help people on your team network inside and outside the company.
- 78 Do not hoard information.
- 79 Identify employee strengths and utilize them.
- 80 Identify employee limitations and only fix them if necessary.
- 81 Understand your own limitations and weaknesses; fixing is better than covering them up.
- 82 Encourage teamwork by putting compatible people on teams.
- 83 Set teams up for success with resources, timelines, and expectations.
- 84 Learn something new every day and encourage your people to as well.
- 85 Make training available--costs and time are lame excuses.
- 86 When approached with a new idea, love it before criticizing or dismissing it.
- 87 Do not tolerate differences between people--welcome them!
- 88 Schedule quarterly team meetings focused on process and practice improvements.
- 89 Stick up for your team, and all employees, if someone else is disparaging them.
- 90 Do not repeat jokes that insult groups of people.
- 91 Do not use curse words. They make you look immature.
- 92 Unite your team with a community project every year, or a few a year.
- 93 Encourage risk-taking handling failures well.
- 94 Create opportunities to push people out of their comfort zones.
- 95 Base decisions on facts, not ego.
- 96 Let people have the thrill of handling their own mistakes--support from behind-the-scenes.
- 97 When you give instructions, realize others will follow them. Change your mind deliberately.
- 98 Write down your commitments so you can honor them.
- 99 Give credit where credit is due--do not take credit for your employees' work or ideas.
- 100 Acknowledge accomplishments--people like reaching goals.
- 101 Be frugal with company resources.
- 102 Do not lie on Expense Reports.
- 103 Learn from people around you. The entry-level person is smarter than you about something.
- 104 Do not act like you know everything. They can tell you don't anyway.



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- 105 Model a high standard of excellence. If your work is below par, others' will be too.
- 106 Avoid letting groupthink impact decisions for you or the team.
- 107 Encourage a life outside of work, don't be mad about it.
- 108 Watch your body language. Sending mixed messages confuses and de-motivates.
- 109 Let your people work. While getting to know them is important, don't chit-chat too much.
- 110 Apologize early.
- 111 Rally around a local community cause or event such as a marathon, fundraiser, nonprofit auction.
- 112 Use social media to connect with your employees and customers. Learn how.
- 113 Celebrate more often! Celebrate business accomplishments, not just birthdays.
- 114 Check your ego at the door when you arrive at work. Arrogance is not inspirational.
- 115 Update your employees on the company and department strategic plan.
- 116 Invite employees to promote the company and get involved with big marketing campaigns.
- 117 Listen more than you speak.
- 118 Ask questions to ensure (and show!) understanding.
- 119 Don't roll your eyes when employees are talking with you. No one likes that.
- 120 Deal with slackers and low performers. Do not expect others to work extra to cover for them.
- 121 Resolve conflicts. Conflicts can be useful, so don't hide your head in the sand.
- 122 Focus on the positive.
- 123 Allow for reasonable connection and contact with the outside world during work.
- 124 Align business strategies with all stakeholders. Don't sacrifice one stakeholder for another.
- 125 Engage already--you don't need more research or ideas. Get on with it!



There are many additional practices that make a difference in how people work.
Call Kelly Byrnes today to discuss how they can be incorporated throughout your organization.

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List Usage Ideas for You

1. Identify seven practices you know you do well already.
2. Identify three practices you know you need to do better immediately.
3. Ask your employees which five are most important to them. Compile their list, and then do those too.

4. Add 10 of your own ideas to this list.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

5. Schedule a quarterly review of this list to further improvement.
6. Share this with your peers so they help improve the culture of the organization.
7. Discuss one of the practices at each staff meeting.