

# LEADERSHIP QUALITIES THAT POSITIVELY IMPACT EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

by Bernadette Baynie



I have had the good fortune of working over many years with a spectrum of leaders. Each one of them brought with them their own unique leadership style. Some of these styles were quite ordinary, but some were truly extraordinary.

As leaders, it is important to remember that one of the most valuable assets of your organisation are your people. If you take care of them and lead them properly – you not only achieve a higher rate of employee engagement but a greater level of customer satisfaction. Sybil F. Stershic, author of “Taking Care of the People Who Matter Most” said:

**“The way your employees feel is the way your customers will feel. And if your employees don’t feel valued, neither will your customers.”**

Recent research has shown that an improvement in leadership style (and consequential leadership behaviours) has a direct beneficial impact upon employee engagement. An engaged employee is highly caring, motivated, and emotionally committed to their work, their leader and their organisation. The key to high employee engagement is to build a strong and loyal relationship between you and your people. Such relationships can reward you back with something called: “discretionary energy” – it’s that layer of additional energy and effort that employees give you, beyond what is expected of them, and this energy can potentially translate into improved employee engagement and ultimately higher performance, loyalty and commitment.

## A SHARED & AUTHENTIC PURPOSE

The way to engage your employees effectively, is to give them a shared vision and purpose. Employees want to know your purpose and destination. ie: where they are being led, why and how they will get there? Create a compelling vision and purpose that genuinely resonates with them. In return, they will be more likely to give you their buy in and discretionary energy. As Jag Randhawa, said

in his book: “The Bright Idea Box: A Proven System to Drive Employee Engagement and Innovation”:

**“All employees have an innate desire to contribute to something bigger than themselves.”**

**Here are the eight best leadership behaviours that, if applied, can elevate your overall leadership style and lift your employee engagement to new heights:**

## 1. INSPIRING YOUR PEOPLE

The greatest leaders have a natural way of inspiring and bringing out the best in others. Without inspiration and motivation, most employees will produce an average performance. So, unlock their discretionary energy by developing a leadership style that energises your people and focuses on enabling them to achieve the results you desire. When you consistently inspire and enable your people, they will in return inspire and enable you.

## 2. BEING TRUSTING

**Your employees’ trust is critical to your success.**

Trust though, needs to be earned. You will never receive true and consistent employee engagement without it. Trust will only be given to you if your employees believe in you. It is imperative that you are always honest with them. Take the time to build a foundation of credibility by:

- always being available to them (where possible), especially when it matters to them the most,
- listening effectively to their needs and opinions,
- sharing an open-door policy between you, to promote easy dialogue and proximity, and most of all
- communicating with them truthfully and consistently on key matters that are likely to impact their role and account abilities.

### 3. GOING THE WAY & NOT JUST SHOWING THE WAY

Most employees want to see their relationship with you, as their leader, grow and flourish. To achieve this, always lead by example. To do so - firstly you need to have a set of personal ethics and behaviours that are aligned with their values. Secondly, you need to "talk the walk" and show them the change that you want to see in your organisation and why. Thirdly, you need to "walk the talk", and model the change authentically in everything that you do, and I mean everything - as behaviour speaks louder than words.

**These are the building blocks to not only creating great employee engagement but a long term beneficial relationship with your people.**

### 4. CREATING SHARED EXPERIENCES

One of the great ways of building engagement and trust with your people is to create shared experiences. It involves you becoming an integral part of the team, not just the head of it. It can also involve you rolling up your sleeves and helping your team members to physically carry out the work. This is a great way to not only build team relationships but to motivate and engage them to new levels. Employees appreciate your shared support as they not only get the job done faster, they gain valuable insights and additional knowledge from you that they otherwise may not have acquired on their own.

### 5. ENABLEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

Employee enablement is critical to employee engagement. The best enablement involves physical, emotional and mental elements. You need to provide your people with empowering tools, training resources and materials and the mental knowledge, skills and business acumen to get the job done effectively. They also need your emotional support to inspire, influence and propel them.

**It's worth remembering that by enabling them – they ultimately enable you.**

### 6. SELF-AWARENESS AND EMPATHY

**The best leaders know that before they can lead and positively influence others they need to lead themselves.**

Leaders who are genuinely self-aware tend to like and trust themselves more. Their strong sense of self-worth, care and empathy connects sublimely with employees. In return, such leaders receive greater consideration and loyalty from their people. In my experience, employees become more committed and loyal to those leaders who make the time to understand their background, values and perspectives. Such information also helps leaders to appreciate the valuable context in which their employees' services are provided.

### 7. DRIVING EXCELLENCE AND RESULTS

Great leaders get great results. Such results are dependent upon a leader knowing how to inspire and motivate their employees to give their 110% and more. They naturally role model the behaviours that they seek in their own people and create a balanced sense of urgency for the activities that matter the most to their organisation. They inspire their people to deliver a higher and more consistent level of team effort and performance through: strong and timely feedback, recognition and rewards.

### CONCLUSION

Great leadership style can be developed and employee engagement can be built, by investing authentically in the above leadership style and behaviours. Not only will your people benefit from such an approach, so too will your organisation and customers.

As the great leadership author Stephen R. Covey once said:

**"Always treat your employees exactly as you want them to treat your best customers!"**

Written by Bernadette Baynie

© All rights reserved

[www.bernadettebaynie.com](http://www.bernadettebaynie.com)



#### Disclaimer

This article is intended to provide you with practical tips. It is not intended to provide any legal advice or legal opinion whatsoever and is not to be used as a substitute for legal advice or other advice on any subject matter and/or for any situation.

No responsibility will be accepted by the author whatsoever for any actions taken or not taken on the basis of this articles and information in it.

Copyrights © 2020 [www.bernadettebaynie.com](http://www.bernadettebaynie.com)