

**HR FUNDAMENTALS**

# **EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT**

**Emma  
Bridger**



# CONTENTS

*List of figures* vi

*List of tables* vii

*Acknowledgements* viii

## **01 What is employee engagement? 1**

Introduction 1

A brief history of employee engagement 3

Definitions of employee engagement 4

Approaches to employee engagement 10

Summary 17

## **02 Does engagement matter? 18**

Introduction 18

Which comes first: Engagement or high performance? 19

The global perspective 20

Engagement is linked to many types of performance and business outcomes 22

Making the case for employee engagement:

Interview with Tanith Dodge, Human Resource Director,  
Marks & Spencer 37

Conclusion 39

## **03 Developing your employee engagement strategy 41**

Introduction 41

Introducing the strategy roadmap: Developing your definition and vision 41

Aligning your engagement strategy to your company strategy:

Defining your goals and outcomes 45

Conclusion 50

- 04 How it works 51**  
Introduction 51  
The (positive) psychology of engagement 52  
The candle problem 60  
A new theory of motivation 62  
The enablers of employee engagement 64  
Conclusion 69
- 05 Employee engagement: How do you do it? 71**  
Introduction 71  
Leadership and line managers 74  
Strategic narrative 89  
Employee voice 96  
Establishing employee voice: A model for success 98  
Integrity 103  
Understanding the science behind the enablers 110  
Conclusion 119
- 06 Employee engagement tools and techniques 120**  
Introduction 120  
Taking a strengths-based approach to employee engagement 120  
What is appreciative inquiry (AI)? 121  
Taking a big-picture approach to your strategic narrative 164  
Conclusion 168
- 07 Planning and action 169**  
Introduction 169  
Penning your plan: A step-by-step guide 170  
Conclusion 190
- 08 Measuring engagement 191**  
Introduction 191  
The employee engagement survey 191  
Employee engagement survey providers 192  
The academic viewpoint 195  
An alternative approach to the employee engagement survey 215

The macro-view: a look at how the policy makers are getting involved with employee engagement	217
Conclusion	222

## **09 The future of employee engagement** 223

Introduction	223
Predictions for the future of employee engagement	223
Views on the future of engagement from thought leaders	229
Summary	239
Conclusion	240
<i>References</i>	242
<i>Further reading</i>	248
<i>Index</i>	249

# What is employee engagement?

01

## Introduction

Finding an answer to the question, ‘What is employee engagement?’ is much easier said than done. Currently there is no single, universally accepted definition of employee engagement, although huge amounts of time and energy have been spent trying to agree upon one! Googling ‘employee engagement’ turns in well over 45 million results: searching for a definition can feel quite overwhelming.

In their groundbreaking report to the UK government, David MacLeod and Nita Clarke (2009) identified over 50 different definitions of employee engagement. No doubt there have been many more definitions added to the list since then. The *Engaging for Success* report (2009) is a good place to start when reviewing the different definitions that exist. The report sparked a country-wide movement focused on improving employee engagement within the UK. There is now a website in place, with a whole range of information, case studies, resources and special interest groups. It’s well worth a visit for anyone with even a passing interest in this topic: [www.engageforsuccess.org](http://www.engageforsuccess.org).

The lack of a single, universally agreed definition of employee engagement presents a great opportunity to figure out what engagement means for your organization. Over the years, I have run training courses for hundreds of people on employee engagement. The discussion usually begins with, ‘What is employee engagement?’ Typically the conversation, and then the realization that there is not a straightforward answer, splits the room: those who feel uncomfortable with the lack of an agreed definition and those who are excited about the prospect of coming up with their own answer. However,

despite the absence of a single definition, when talking about what engagement means, some key themes emerge pretty quickly. Words such as involvement, commitment, discretionary effort, collaboration, motivation and performance are common. How practitioners then choose to convert these themes into an actual definition is up to them.

There are also those who believe an exact definition is not needed: you know it when you see it; it is something that you feel and is beyond a single definition. In fact, some organizations I work with choose not to define employee engagement at all. Instead they choose to talk about creating a great place to work or similar. The critical success factor is that however you choose to define or talk about engagement within your organization, people understand this. It's vital that, amongst the senior leadership team at the very least, there is a common understanding of what you collectively mean by 'employee engagement'. The term has become so ubiquitous that it is often used freely within organizations to mean different things to different people. Developing a definition, or expressing what you understand by employee engagement within your organization, is a great place to start to improve engagement.

## ACTIVITY

### Engagement brainstorm

You can use this simple activity as a great way to get your stakeholders to begin thinking about what they understand by employee engagement:

- In a team meeting or at an engagement workshop, ask people to take one minute to individually write down as many words as possible that come into their head when they think about employee engagement.
- When the minute is up, ask everyone to circle the one word that resonates most with them.
- Then ask each person to call out their word, and capture the various words on a flip chart.
- Use these outputs to generate a discussion on what engagement means to people.
- Good questions to ask are what employee engagement is and what it isn't. This discussion could form the basis of a definition for your organization.
- What is immediately clear is that it means different things to different people and is very personal.

## A brief history of employee engagement

When was the first time you heard the term ‘employee engagement’? I can’t remember exactly when it was I first heard it but it was early on in the 2000s. You might be surprised to learn that engagement was first referred to in an article by William Kahn in 1990, although he talks about personal engagement and disengagement, rather than employee engagement. Kahn’s research looked specifically at the psychological conditions of personal engagement and disengagement at work. Within the article Kahn talks about personal engagement as the extent to which people employ and express their personal selves at work, and disengagement as the extent to which people withdraw and defend their personal selves at work. Interestingly Kahn identified meaningfulness, safety and availability as psychological conditions that impact personal engagement at work: these are themes that come up time and again when looking at what employee engagement means.

When looking at the academic literature, engagement is a term used in the following ways:

- to refer to a psychological state (eg involvement, commitment, attachment, mood);
- to refer to a performance construct (eg either effort or observable behaviour, including pro-social and organizational citizenship behaviour);
- to refer to a disposition (eg positive affect);
- or for some a combination of the above.

The hugely influential work of Gallup, as reported by Harter *et al* (2012), played no small part in the rise in interest in employee engagement. Gallup began by looking at what was unique to high-performing businesses and business units. Their extensive work resulted in the development of the Q12<sup>®</sup> tool, which is essentially a 12-question survey designed to measure engagement. Their substantial credibility and expertise, coupled with a tool allowing measurement of employee engagement, appealed to a number of chief or senior executives (commonly known as the ‘c-suite’) and an industry of employee engagement surveys was born.

We have seen interest in employee engagement growing year on year. More and more surveys appear, with different models, many claiming that they are the correct (and only) way to define and measure engagement. And with the

rise of the survey we have also seen a growing body of evidence to create a compelling business case that employee engagement matters – more of that in the next chapter. In the UK alone the Engage for Success movement received endorsement and support from both the Labour government and more recently the Coalition government. Employee engagement is now everyday language within organizations, and yet there is still a huge amount of discussion as to what it actually means. Let's take a look at some of the definitions of employee engagement that currently exist.

## ACTIVITY

### Engagement timeline

What is the history of employee engagement within your organization? Have a go at mapping the evolution of employee engagement within your company as a timeline:

- When did you first start talking about it or looking at it?
- What sort of activities did you start doing?
- Capture your engagement timeline and track how engagement has improved or declined over time if you have the data.
- Map the different types of activity your engagement programme has involved against your timeline.
- Critically evaluate the activity you have mapped against your timeline: what has worked, what has not worked and are you making any progress in improving employee engagement?

## Definitions of employee engagement

Different definitions of employee engagement make reference to a range of human resource management (HRM) and organizational behaviour concepts such as work effort, commitment to the organization, job satisfaction, motivation and optimal functioning. However, what they tend to have in common is that they view engagement as an internal state of being. Engagement is something that the employee has to offer and cannot be 'required' as part of the employment contract or objective setting process. The following definitions provide a flavour of the many definitions that exist.



The Engage for Success website defines engagement as: ‘A workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organization’s goals and values, motivated to contribute to organizational success, and are able at the same time to enhance their own sense of well-being.’ The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), in their work with the Kingston Employee Engagement Consortium, define employee engagement as: ‘being positively present during the performance of work by willingly contributing intellectual effort, experiencing positive emotions and meaningful connections to others’ (Alfes *et al*, 2010).

This definition provides three dimensions to employee engagement:

- 1 *Intellectual engagement*, ie thinking hard about the job and how to do it better.
- 2 *Affective engagement*, ie feeling positively about doing a good job.
- 3 *Social engagement*, ie actively taking opportunities to discuss work-related improvements with others at work.

Interestingly, academics tend to talk about ‘work engagement’ as opposed to employee engagement. Shaufeli and Bakker (2004), two well-known and highly regarded academics who have made a significant contribution to the world of engagement, define work engagement as: ‘a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption. Rather than a momentary and specific state, engagement refers to a more persistent and pervasive affective-cognitive state that is not focused on any particular object, event, individual, or behaviour.’

*Vigour* is characterized by high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, the willingness to invest effort in one’s work, and persistence even in the face of difficulties. *Dedication* refers to being strongly involved in one’s work and experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge. *Absorption* is characterized by being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one’s work, whereby time passes quickly and one has difficulties with detaching oneself from work. It is easy to see that there are overlaps between this academic definition of work engagement and the CIPD’s definition of employee engagement.

Professor Katie Truss, who was instrumental in setting up the Kingston Engagement Consortium, defines employee engagement (in Alfes *et al*, 2010) as:

about creating opportunities for employees to connect with their colleagues, managers and wider organization. It is also about creating an environment

where employees are motivated to want to connect with their work and really care about doing a good job... It is a concept that places flexibility, change and continuous improvement at the heart of what it means to be an employee and an employer in a 21st century workplace.

The Institute of Employment Studies (IES) defines (Robinson *et al*, 2004) engagement as:

[a] positive attitude held by the employee towards the organization and its values. An engaged employee is aware of the business context, and works with colleagues to improve performance within the job for the benefit of the organization. The organization must work to develop and nurture engagement, which requires a two-way relationship between employee and employer.

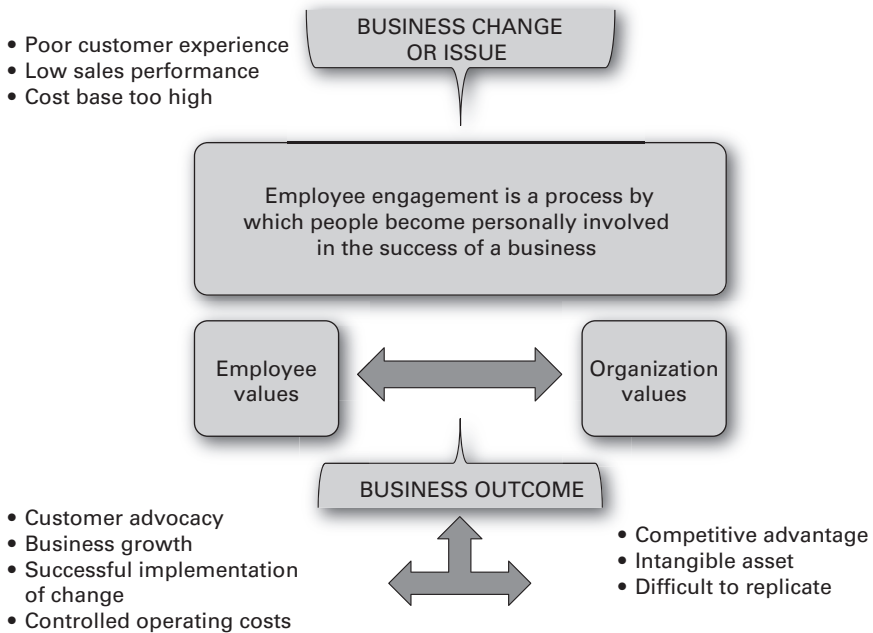
It is clear to see from these definitions alone that there are common themes that run through them. When asking people to define employee engagement, though, one of the big questions asks whether engagement is an attitude, a behaviour or an outcome.

Some would argue engagement is all about *attitudes* towards the organization, or people we work with. For example, we may feel proud to work at a particular company, we might like the people we work with or our boss. For others engagement is all about *behaviours*, for example, would we recommend our company to others? Or do we go the extra mile to finish a piece of work? Finally for others, engagement is all about the business *outcomes*, for example, are people staying with the company rather than leaving? Are employees less absent, or is there more innovation?

Most engagement surveys seek to measure all three of these components and they are difficult to separate. For example, employees choosing to stay with the company is both a behaviour and a business outcome and quite likely the result of the beliefs and attitudes the employee holds about the organization. However, these attitudes could be, 'I want to keep working here because I love my job and the people I work with,' or they could be, 'I don't really want to be here any more but it's tough out there and I'm not sure I could find another job like this, so I'll stay put.' With this example, you begin to see the danger of simply focusing on one aspect of engagement. People may be staying because they are highly engaged, or they may be staying because there are few jobs in the current marketplace. It's my belief that they are all related and important for engagement. It is less important which comes first, what the pre-conditions of engagement are; what we tend to observe is that they all reinforce each other to contribute to employees' overall engagement.

The definition I use, which is adapted from the work of John Smythe (2007), author of *The Chief Engagement Officer*, describes employee engagement as: ‘the extent to which people are personally involved in the success of the business’. When explaining this definition I use the model in Figure 1.1 below.

**FIGURE 1.1** What is employee engagement?



I use this definition and model for a number of reasons:

- It's simple and people understand it straight away. It differentiates between simply being happy or satisfied at work and engaged.
- It views engagement as an attitude. I believe I am personally involved in the success of the business, which is related to attitudes such as pride and loyalty.
- It views engagement as a behaviour. If I am personally involved in the success of the business then I am more likely to go the extra mile because I care.
- It views engagement as an outcome. The model acknowledges that there is a reason we focus on engagement in the first place, such as reducing employee attrition, and that by engaging our employees we will facilitate the desired business outcome.

Finally, this model also highlights the importance of alignment between an individual's values and the organization's values. Or at the very least, there must not be any conflict between the two. Engagement must be a two-way process: the organization has to work hard to ensure it is set up and hard-wired to develop engagement but also the employee has to choose to volunteer themselves to be engaged. Engagement cannot be demanded of an employee, key performance indicators cannot be set that state, 'You must be engaged by the end of Q3', for example. If the values of the organization are incongruent with the employee's personal values, it is unlikely they will feel engaged, at least for any length of time. The type of person who actively pursues a career in the charity sector, for example, may find it difficult to engage with the purpose and values of an investment bank. So whilst I believe it is possible to experience engagement in the short term, if employee values and the organization's values and purpose are incongruent, engagement will not be sustainable.

## ACTIVITY

### Peak experience

The following activity is a great way to uncover what engagement means within your own organization and develop a definition that works for you.

Ask your team or the group you are working with to think about a time when they were really engaged at work – why they loved what they were doing. Ask them to get into pairs and spend 10 minutes interviewing each other (five minutes each), using the following questions:

- Tell me about your most valued or engaging experience you have had in your work life? A time when you really loved your job?
- What were the conditions that made it possible?
- How did these experiences make you feel?

Ask pairs to capture an overview of their partner's story, what made it possible, and how it felt, and to also capture any key themes they observe emerging. Each pair will then feed back their partner's story to the rest of the group. When they do this capture the key themes on a flip chart.

**TABLE 1.1** Peak-experience capture template

	THE STORY	WHAT MADE IT POSSIBLE	HOW IT FELT
ME			
MY PARTNER			

### Outputs

As pairs are recounting their stories, capture the key words that they feed back. Typically this will include themes such as:

- valued;
- pride;
- confidence;
- autonomy;
- trusted;
- teamworking;
- great manager;
- challenging work;
- success.

This exercise allows people to reconnect with the emotional side of engagement – by telling their stories people remember what it feels like to be engaged in their work. This is also a great exercise to get a group in a positive state of mind to talk about engagement.

### Discuss and explain

When everyone has fed back their stories take a look at the words you have captured:

- What are the group's observations of the words you have captured?
- Using the words you have captured, ask the group to develop a definition or description of what engagement means in your organization.

## Approaches to employee engagement

What is perhaps more useful when considering what we mean by ‘employee engagement’ is to evaluate different approaches to improving or developing it. The Engage for Success movement argues that it is helpful to consider employee engagement as a workplace approach, designed to:

- ensure employees are committed to the organization’s goals and values;
- motivate employees to contribute towards the organization’s success;
- enhance employees’ overall sense of well-being.

In their *Engaging for Success* report to government MacLeod and Clarke (2009) differentiate between level 1 engagement, which they term ‘transactional engagement’ and level 2 engagement which they term ‘transformational engagement’ (see Figure 1.2). *Transactional engagement* is defined by a reactive set of transactions aimed at improving engagement, often in response to survey results. A transactional approach to engagement often begins with an engagement survey, which highlights a number of areas for action. An action plan is then put in place and actions are ticked off the list until they are complete, at which point engagement is done, and forgotten about until the next survey comes around. A transactional approach is often identified by a project or programme aimed to improve engagement,

**FIGURE 1.2** Transactional engagement versus transformational engagement

**Transactional engagement:**

Act on feedback from survey  
Set of activities and targets  
Reactive engagement  
Is an add-on, separate activity  
Not integral to business  
Set of transactions



**Transformational engagement:**

A way of doing business  
Employees integral  
Proactive  
Insight regularly sought,  
harnessed and acted on  
Integrated



with an end date. Engagement is not integrated into the business strategy and culture, but is a separate, add-on activity. *Transformational engagement*, however, is integrated into the business strategy and culture. It is proactive, with employee insight, ideas and opinions regularly sought, harnessed and acted upon. A survey is not necessarily required to understand how employees feel about the organization, or to drive action focused on improving engagement because this already happens as part of the business focus, culture and leadership style. A natural desire to improve engagement exists within the business. In reality, these two types of approach to engagement are not discrete – more often organizations sit somewhere between the two. I have found that discussing where your organization is on this scale is much more beneficial to improving engagement than spending time and energy debating a definition.

### Discussion point

- Think about where your organization sits on this scale: are you nearer transactional engagement or transformational engagement or somewhere in the middle?
- How do your leaders view engagement?
- Start thinking about what you could do differently to start to move you towards transformational engagement.

Another way of looking at these different approaches is to consider taking either a *programmatically approach* to employee engagement (similar to transactional approach) or a *philosophical approach* to engagement (similar to transformational engagement). A programmatic approach views engagement as a programme, with a beginning and end, often managed by a project management office. However, a philosophical approach to engagement views engagement as a management mindset, which is common across the whole organization.

**TABLE 1.2** What does transformational engagement look like?

Companies with a transactional engagement approach...	Companies with a transformational engagement approach...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Start with an engagement survey and use the outputs from the survey to take action to improve engagement</li> <li>● Take a deficit approach – looking only to improve what isn't working</li> <li>● See engagement as a project or an initiative, owned by HR or worse still a project team</li> <li>● Once the actions from the survey have been delivered engagement is not talked about until the next survey</li> <li>● Don't view engagement as not part of the overall business strategy</li> <li>● Have budget for the survey but no budget for what happens after the survey</li> <li>● Don't invest in the skills and capabilities of their managers to ensure they can engage their teams</li> <li>● Don't give employees a voice other than the annual survey</li> <li>● Don't listen to employees in an ongoing way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● May not even need to do a survey – they have their finger on the pulse and aren't reliant on an annual survey to tell them how their employees feel</li> <li>● Ensure engagement is integrated into everything they do: every employee touch-point from recruitment, to on-boarding, to performance management and even exit is designed to ensure it contributes towards employee engagement rather than eroding it</li> <li>● Employee engagement is a key part of the organization strategy</li> <li>● Managers are developed to ensure they have the skills and capabilities to engage their people</li> <li>● The organization is a listening organization: this listening is ongoing and authentic, not simply a once-a-year survey opportunity</li> <li>● Employees genuinely have a voice and can contribute to the success of the organization</li> <li>● There is a high level of trust in management</li> <li>● Take a strengths-based approach to understand the conditions under which employees flourish at work</li> <li>● Engagement is seen as everyone's responsibility</li> </ul>



## What does an engaged organization look and feel like?

This is a blog written by Hayley McGarvey (2012), an employee engagement consultant at People Lab, and brings to life what an engaged organization looks and feels like. The organization she profiles is Capital One, which is a financial services organization. Financial services organizations are perhaps not the first companies that spring to mind when you think about great places to work. They are however currently the 'number 1 great place to work in Europe' as measured by the Great Place To Work<sup>®</sup> Institute (2014):

*After a four-hour train journey, we arrived outside Capital One's HQ, in Nottingham. From the outside, Capital One looks just as you might expect; a gargantuan block of sharply cornered grey stone, gleaming glass doors leading to uniformed reception staff, sitting adjacent to sleek, card activated barriers. It could be any business HQ, I thought to myself as I secured the obligatory security pass around my neck. How very, very wrong I was.*

*After our scheduled meeting, we were taken on a tour of the building. Our tour began in the fraud department, an amazing greenhouse-like room, brimming with natural light. The room is filled with desks and equipment, but scattered with little breakout zones – areas with sofas, where people can take a break and relax. The building has a wonderfully relaxed personality, which struck me within minutes of being inside – everywhere I looked, employees were chatting, smiling, enjoying their work.*

*We moved on through other departments, each one individually styled and buzzing with vibrancy and colour. My favourite of these departments left me a little speechless; an enormous room, with an open plan office area of desks, computers, employees... oh, and a lighthouse and three beach huts tucked away in the corner. The beach huts provide space for people wanting to work alone – the open-plan styling of the departments leave little room for privacy, so the company have provided an area for those who want a little 'me-time'. And, of course, they couldn't do things by halves, could they? The walls behind the beach huts are decorated with photographic-wallpaper of beach scenes, and model seagulls are suspended from the ceiling. At the end of the row of beach huts stands a giant blue lighthouse, which houses a large table and chairs, for meetings.*

*The final part of the tour was just the icing on the cake – a fully equipped music room, for employees who want to practice with their band, or just play a few songs to help them think straight. This is completely mad, I kept thinking – but I didn't stop smiling, and that's the point, isn't it? It's no wonder that Capital One are voted first in Britain's Great Places to Work, and it was wonderful to see such a fantastic example of how employee engagement can infuse a company with such vitality.*

*As we left the building, I saw a suggestions box attached to the wall. I spent the train journey home thinking about what suggestions might be in that box, trying to think of suggestions that I might make, but I didn't come up with anything.*

## **CASE STUDY** What does employee engagement mean for your organization?

---

Bard are a great example of a company taking the opportunity of the lack of a universal definition of engagement to develop their own. They are part of Napp Pharmaceuticals, founded in 1923 by a chemist called Herman Richard Napp and a UK lawyer called Ernest Alfred Clifford. The current owners acquired the company in the 1960s, and it remains a privately owned company that is part of a worldwide association of independent companies. At the end of 2011 they were ranked 15th largest pharmaceutical company in the UK based on GP prescription sales and were the fastest growing company in the Top 15. They believe this success is driven by the fact that they continue to make the culture and their people a key strategic focus.

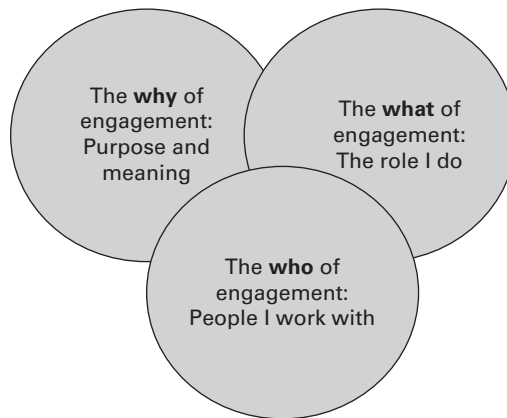
Mike Mair, Head of Training and Development at Bard, led a project in 2012 to understand what engagement meant for Bard. Developing effective employee engagement was a key part of their overall business strategy; however, when they further explored this they realized that they did not have a clear understanding of what they meant by employee engagement. Mike recognized that an important first step in developing employee engagement at Bard was to spend time figuring out what engagement meant to Bard, to develop a company-wide understanding. In summary, Mike wanted to demystify engagement. In order to do this he and his

colleagues read books and journals, looked at case studies, researched the topic, and spoke to experts, all with a view to answering the following questions:

- What is engagement?
- What does it mean for Bard?

Following their research phase, and to begin to answer these questions, Mike led a session with their leadership team. The team spent time talking about engagement and what it meant to them, building on the knowledge they had acquired over the previous months. On discussing engagement as a team, what was clear was that it meant different things to different people: for some having a company purpose they could connect with was important, for others it was the people they worked with. There was no single definition that could effectively cover the variety of opinions within the room. Thankfully the session did result in a 'light-bulb moment' for Mike and the team. They concluded that for Bard, employee engagement is about the *why*, the *what* and the *who*:

**FIGURE 1.3** The 'why, what and who' of employee engagement



- The *why* relates to the meaning people find within their work, the emotional connection to the company, the overall purpose of the organization. Questions such as 'Why do I come to work?' and 'What does my work mean for me?' helped them to discuss their own personal engagement 'whys'. For some people it is about supplying quality products to patients but for others it might be about making sure employees operate in a safe environment. Whilst the team concluded that the *why* is an important part of engagement for many employees, they also realized the importance of having employees figure this out for themselves, rather than have the company tell them the answer.

- The *what* is essentially about the job people do. For some people the ability to have autonomy was important to their engagement, for others the opportunity for mastery, or structure and process. Again the team observed that the *what* was different for different people, what engages employees in their role is very individual.
- Finally the *who* relates to a sense of belonging. For some employees, engagement and going the extra mile is all about who they work with: their teams, or colleagues, or their manager.

Mike argues that having this model of engagement for Bard has helped to create a common language across the business. The model allows for flexibility, giving employees the opportunity to talk about, and understand, what engages them at work. Mike believes articulating a definition for Bard would have stifled this opportunity to involve employees in thinking about what engagement means for them.

Bard are now using their model to have conversations with their people: asking them which of the three areas are important to their own engagement, and how engaged they currently are with each of the three areas. They have now launched a leadership engagement programme, whereby leaders attend a half-day workshop, which looks at the background and theory of engagement. Leaders are then given a few weeks to assimilate the learning and when they return the model is shared with them. They then share this framework with their teams, having conversations and dialogue about what engagement means to them, but all using the common language that the model offers them.

Bard are also looking at how they can measure the impact of using this approach to improve engagement. The model is of course the starting point for discussions on engagement; leaders are then tasked to take action based on the outputs of their conversations with their teams. Mike believes that they are already seeing better development conversations happening; he states that this approach is enabling the company to get to know its people better. Rather than making assumptions about what engagement means and what will make the difference, they are having company-wide conversations, involving employees in coming up with their own understanding of the term.

Mike is keen to point out that engagement is already good within Bard, as measured by their annual survey; however, he believes that taking this approach will take them from good to great:

*We have good engagement but we can make it better – if we can demystify employee engagement and use this model and approach to facilitate good*

*conversations then we believe it will have the impact we need. But of course it's all about what happens as a result of these conversations. Managers will be asked to present back and share what they are going to do as a result of their conversations, this is when we will really see the impact of using this approach.*

In summary, Mike believes that using this model enables personalization of employee engagement, to ensure the approach and actions taken are right for individuals, their teams and the company. The model has helped create a flexibility that a wordy definition would not have. This approach has freed Bard from 'ticking the boxes', to move to a more transformational approach.

## Summary

There is no doubt that the debate will continue as to what employee engagement is, how to develop it and the real impact it has. However, what is clear is that this increased focus on engaging employees has been significant not only in improving people's experience of work, but in improving the performance of organizations as well. Companies are increasingly realizing that an engaged workforce is not only good for employees, but good for customers and overall business performance as well.

The books in the **HR Fundamentals** series take a practical approach to core HR topics, offering the ambitious practitioner guidance that can be immediately understood and applied in a busy environment. Ideal for any HR professional, and especially those working for CIPD Levels 5 to 7 qualifications.

“Emma Bridger’s book fits into a gap for students and professionals who are new to engagement and who have been looking for a text to make sense of it. It draws the reader through the main concepts, processes and discussions, providing many case examples.”

**David Saxon, Employee Engagement Lecturer, Middlesex University, London.**

“Bridger has made a powerful connection between the diverse knowledge of employee engagement and the actual practices that will make a difference. The book is loaded with ideas you can use. Read the book today and put employee engagement to work.”

**David Zinger, [www.davidzinger.com](http://www.davidzinger.com), founder of the Employee Engagement Network**

“A compelling and thorough coverage of the evidence that supports the correlation between levels of employee engagement and overall business performance.”

**Tanith Dodge, HR Director, Marks & Spencer**

Achieving employee engagement is crucial to the success and continued high performance of any organization. But, with budgets tighter than ever before, economic struggles and increasingly stressful workplaces, it is becoming a difficult task.

An indispensable resource for HR practitioners and managers, **Employee Engagement** offers a complete practical guide to understanding, measuring and building engagement. Grounded in engagement theory and an understanding of psychology combined with practical tools, techniques and diagnostics, this book will help you assess and drive engagement in your organization. Case studies include Marks & Spencer, Capital One, AXA PPP Healthcare, the Ministry of Justice, Mace and RSA.

**Emma Bridger** is an award-winning employee engagement specialist and Director of People Lab, an employee engagement consultancy working with clients worldwide. Emma has designed and developed the CIPD range of short employee engagement courses as well as contributing to the UK Government review *Engaging for Success*. She is a member of the Engage for Success movement as part of its “guru group”. Emma is also a regular conference speaker and case studies detailing her work have been widely published.

**Kogan Page**  
London  
Philadelphia  
New Delhi  
[www.koganpage.com](http://www.koganpage.com)



Human resources management