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## President's message

We are very excited to announce that we were selected by one of Canada's largest financial services organizations to provide full service 360° assessments, development planning and coaching support to their senior managers and executives world wide. Our achievement winning this engagement in a very competitive process, along with our ongoing success helping other customers use our integrated talent-management services, positions Felix Global as a true world leader in assessment tool application and top-tier management and leadership development services.

In other news, at the beginning of the year, we launched Felix Global Search™, an executive search service that brings 55+ years of experience in the field, and deploys intelligent, responsive and focused searches that identify and bring forward the top-performers in the marketplace. Our search philosophy inspires us to provide our clients with the best-fit candidate for each position, and to remain focused on the new employee's critical first 100 days in order to enhance long-term engagement and retention.

With economic pressure here in Canada, as well as near recessionary conditions with our largest trading partner, the United States, and immense pressure on corporate North America with pending wholesale loss of middle and senior talent, we at Felix are well positioned to assist our customers with integrated human capital solutions that allow you to focus on optimizing your human, working and investment capital in order to drive a high-performance culture for positive business outcomes.

As Felix continually responds to our customers' changing needs, we also continue to innovate and adapt our solutions, keeping them at the forefront of thinking, and of the highest quality, providing our clients with the most up-to-date solutions for the greatest return on investment.

As always, I'd be pleased to hear from you. Should you have any questions or wish to add to this newsletter, I invite you to contact me directly at [jgraham@felixglobal.com](mailto:jgraham@felixglobal.com) or call me at (416) 645-2092.

## Executive Coaching: Three Ways to Retain and Engage Talent

By Anne A. Cira, Executive Coach, Felix Global



### Executive Coaching: Three Ways to Retain and Engage Talent

The looming talent shortage, and the recognition that people are the last remaining competitive advantage an organization has, means engagement and retention strategies now require more attention than ever before. One of the most cost effective and successful ways organizations can tackle this issue is to retain the talent they have, and to train the next level of leaders-to-be.

Hiring an executive coach is money well spent. Coaches help current leaders take on new roles, as well as train new leaders, providing a process for development, guidance and support that will benefit the coachee and his or her entire area of influence.

### Three Talent Tips

To get the best ROI from an executive coach, managers need to be involved in the coaching program. They can clarify the organization's expectations, review and refine the development plan and provide feedback.

#### 1. Identify three areas that need work

It is critical that coachees interview prospective coaches in person in order to determine if that coach's process and personality meet the coachee's needs.

A co-active coaching model can help set the stage for a successful engagement. One of the early phases in this model includes an assessment that helps the coachee decide which aspects of his or her role would benefit most from development. A development plan should be a co-creation and should start with three areas of focus (don't try to tackle everything!). This plan should include action items, milestones and success criteria. When the coachee's manager reviews the initial plan, and meets with the coachee periodically to discuss progress, the manager will be well positioned to support the

coachee's ongoing development after the program wraps up.

#### 2. Three keys to engagement

People are much more likely to stay when they are:

- Doing work that draws on their natural strengths
- Working in a culture they value
- Loving the work they do

Guiding coachees to create a personal mission statement, such as, "What do you want to accomplish with your life?" will provide a coachee with the architecture necessary to build a successful life, one based on his or her own definition of success.

#### 3. Expect three things to improve

In my experience, three aspects of leadership always improve after a coaching engagement:

- Focus on goals
- People skills
- Time management

Even if a leader sought coaching for other reasons, almost every engagement inevitably results in improvements in these three areas. ■

## What's New:

- Felix expands the team!  
Brian Hodgins, VP British Columbia,  
Lori Sarginson, VP Alberta  
Denise Zaporzan, VP Manitoba and  
Saskatchewan
- Felix has opened offices in Winnipeg,  
Alberta and Vancouver

# The Power of Employee Engagement

By Maryann Fraboni, Ph.D., VP Measurement & Assessment, Felix Global

*“Great organizations achieve sustainable growth and profits because they do what other organizations don’t: they maximize the innate, individual talents of their employees to connect with customers. They know that tapping the resources of humans is the only remaining area where significant improvements can—and do—lead to an unlimited source of competitive advantages.”*

**Curt Coffman, Gabriel Gonzalez-Molina, in Follow this Path, 2002**

You’ve probably heard the old joke about a CEO’s response to the question, how many people work in your company? Answer: “About half of them.” Not so funny when you look at the following statistics and see how much time, energy and resources are wasted.

## Scary Statistics

The statistics on workforce engagement are shocking. According to the Gallup Management Journal’s semi-annual Employee Engagement Index:

- 29% of employees are actively engaged in their jobs
- 54% are not engaged
- 17% are actively disengaged

What’s going on and what can be done about it?

## How to Keep an Employee Engaged

Engaged workers produce more, make more money for the company, create emotional engagement and build loyal customers. They contribute to good working environments where people are productive, ethical and accountable. They stay with the organization longer and are more committed to quality and growth than are the other two groups of not-engaged and actively-disengaged workers. How do they do so?

- A strong relationship with their managers and coworkers
- Clear communication from their managers
- A clear path set for focusing on their strengths
- A strong commitment to taking risks and stretching for excellence

Engaged employees tend to get the least amount of focus and attention from

managers in part because they’re doing what they are needed to do. They set goals, meet and exceed expectations and charge enthusiastically toward the next tough task.

The challenge for managers comes when the first signs of disengaging appear from an engaged worker. The symptoms need to be addressed immediately or else the disconnection is likely to continue. Most of the time this disengagement process can be interrupted by having meaningful conversations that strengthen commitment through relationship.

Great managers spend most of their time with the most productive and talented people because these employees have the most potential.

## Expectations, Clarification and Measurement

To grow and sustain employee engagement, managers must regularly provide expectations, clarification, and measurement. Usually companies hire people to do three things:

1. Achieve the business outcomes of their roles
2. Contribute to creating a productive workplace
3. Drive customer engagement

A good place to start is with conversations about expectations for every person in a given role. Get the individual to view his or her role from a broader perspective instead of from a narrow task-oriented point of view. Encourage the employee to see how his or her work contributes to the organizational future. Ask, “What are the outcomes you are supposed to achieve? What were you hired to do? How do you contribute to making this a great place to work? Are you creating engaged customers?” The objective is to focus employees on outcomes as well as the steps it takes to get there.

Next, managers can help employees clarify how they can achieve outcomes. Sometimes managers can help employees change their roles to better fit their talents. A person who is not adept at written reports and details can collaborate with someone who is. This requires self-awareness of strengths and weaknesses on the part of both the manager and employee, and a willingness to be flexible and find solutions.

Measurement is crucial to an employee’s feeling of success, as long as the measurement focuses on outcomes, not steps. Good measurement includes regular feedback, aligns with outcomes and matches the expectations for the role.

Engaged employees need strong relationships and clear communications from their managers. They also need to be stimulated and challenged in their areas of talent and strengths to help them to continue to grow.

Effective managers and leaders help their employees design and own their own goals, targets and milestones. Everyone needs support and help with focus in order to keep the goals aligned with business results. Great managers provide coaching to facilitate progress and to build talents into strengths.

## Handling “Not-Engaged” Employees

Efforts to raise levels of engagement are worthwhile for those in the not-engaged range. Not-engaged employees tend to concentrate on tasks rather than the goals and outcomes they are expected to accomplish. They want to be told what to do just so they can do it and say they have finished. They focus on accomplishing a task vs. achieving an outcome. Managers who only provide tasks to an employee reinforce not-engaged behaviors and actually move 180 degrees away from engaging the heart, mind, and soul of that person.

Employees who are not-engaged tend to feel their contributions are being overlooked, and their potential is not being tapped. They often feel this way because they don’t have productive relationships with their managers, or with their coworkers.

The way to get people to become a part of an organization is through relationships. Employees who feel disconnected

emotionally from their coworkers and supervisor do not feel committed to their work. They hang back and do the minimum because they don't believe anyone cares. These employees "lower the bar" for themselves.

Managers need to demonstrate a sense of really caring about what's important to employees. Managers can help employees refocus on the demands of their roles and on the skills, knowledge, and talents they bring to their jobs. The manager who takes the time to have a dialogue about an employee's strengths, and how these can make a difference, forges essential ties and connections that lead to employee commitment.

## Managing "Actively-Disengaged" Employees

Too often people have to work with others who have become disenchanted and actively disengaged. Actively disengaged employees aren't just unhappy at work. They act out their discontent, sowing the seeds of negativity at every opportunity. They undermine the work of others. They are not just indifferent to company goals and mission, they express mistrust and outright animosity.

As workers increasingly rely on each other to generate products and services, the problems and tensions fostered by actively disengaged workers can cause great damage to an organization's functioning.

The Gallup Organization estimates 22 million actively disengaged employees cost the American economy up to \$350 billion per year in lost productivity, including absence, illness and other problems that result when workers are unhappy at work.

A good manager will identify those who are disengaged, and explore the reasons behind the disconnect to determine if coaching or other interventions are appropriate. In some cases, people will respond favorably to opportunities to reconnect and rekindle their interest and enthusiasm for their jobs. Most people search for ways to make their lives and work meaningful, and only disengage when they feel hopeless.

Those who are actively disengaged may thrive on the negativity and refuse to become part of any solution, preferring to perpetuate problems. If they repeatedly refuse opportunities to engage again,



terminating their employment should be seriously considered in order to avoid further damage to staff morale and organizational progress.

## Leadership Actions: What Employees Want a Manager to Do

The path forward for great managers to engage employees and keep them engaged begins with asking them what they want and what is important in order to be effective in their roles. Here is a summary of what workers responding to a Gallup survey said they want from their managers:

- Focus me
- Know me
- Care about me
- Hear me
- Help me feel proud
- Help me review my contributions
- Equip me
- Help me see my value
- Help me grow
- Help me see my importance

- Help me build mutual trust
- Challenge me

### And how do you do that?

- Provide feedback and guidance
- Make real time to discuss problems
- Seek ideas and input from everyone
- Provide the resources to solve problems or to do a job well
- Give real recognition and/or reward
- Provide opportunities for people to develop their potential
- Keep the pressure to perform and achieve more-with-less realistic
- Provide opportunities for social interaction
- Train people how to resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Promote joy and appropriate humor within the office
- Be flexible; help people to actively balance work and home responsibilities ■

# The Art, Science and Philosophy of Successful Executive Search

By Gord Wilson, Managing Director, Felix Global Search

What sets one search firm apart from another is not its search engines or research abilities - all search firms should have these capabilities. The key to exceptional executive search lies in the finesse a search firm brings to the process: the art of creating partnerships with the engaging client, the artful handling of candidates, the science of assessing the needs of both parties and the awareness of each party's philosophy regarding the search process.

A strong partnership between the client and the search firm is vital, but many organizations overlook the importance of internal alignment. For the client to get the best ROI from a search firm, everyone involved in the hire should agree on the goals and the search criteria, and share information internally in order to convey key desires to the search partner.

Lack of alignment can seriously hamper timelines, preventing organizations from

getting their products to market on time, and potentially setting off a domino effect across the enterprise that can have a negative impact on the bottom line.

A search firm worth its salt, however, will help the client establish internal criteria before the search process begins. This process requires artful handling of internal parties, and the right scientific assessment tools to help build strong candidate profiles.

The clients' and the search firm's philosophies also need to be aligned. For instance, if an organization believes the search vendor's role is simply to act as a negotiator who hires the person the organization already wants, this notion should be on the table from the start. A search firm that sees its role as providing both parties with the information necessary to make winning decisions might be loathe to negotiate on behalf of a candidate it did not think was the best



fit for the client. When each party shares their philosophy, the partnership can move forward with fewer stumbling blocks.

Successful searches are the result of savvy searchers who know how to combine the art of persuasion, the science of assessment and the philosophy of finding the right person for that particular job. ■

**The Felix Global** is a quarterly newsletter published by Felix Global for its customers, clients and associates. Views expressed are those of the various authors and do not necessarily represent the opinions of Felix Global.

Felix is an international organization specializing in Employee Lifecycle Management. Established in 1986 as Victor Apa & Associates Inc., Felix helps business leaders assess, understand and shape their corporate cultures to drive exceptional business performance one person at a time.

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[www.felixglobal.com](http://www.felixglobal.com) or call 1-877-789-7023

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## Felix Global Search<sup>TM</sup>

Providing the right information for making winning decisions. Felix Global Search<sup>TM</sup> helps companies find the right fit for best performance and enhanced retention.

Felix Global Search<sup>TM</sup> leverages a broad spectrum of talent management services that help deliver high-quality candidates.

- > Unprecedented access to top performers
- > 55+ years of combined experience
- > Available nationwide with 19 regional offices
- > Retained Search: providing dedicated, strategic search in true partnership with our client, with a commitment to success
- > On-boarding support for first 100 days

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