

Engaged Employees create Loyal Customers who in turn create Bigger Profit Potential.

So how can Corporate Team building, Conferences and Hospitality Events positively impact on Employee Engagement? In an upcoming year that looks likely to be tough on businesses, investing in quality Corporate Hospitality and Teambuilding Programmes is more important than ever.

Engaged Employees create Loyal Customers who in turn create Bigger Profits. For a few, including Richard Branson at Virgin, this simple premise was the basis upon which they had already begun to build their businesses. As Branson says: "We developed our business ideas in the belief that our first priority should be the people who work for the companies, then the customers, then the shareholders. If staff are motivated then customers will be happy, and the shareholders will benefit through the company's success."

In the banking sector it was known that a 5% increase in Customer Loyalty could produce profitability increases upwards of 25%. One Restaurant chain observed that the 20% of stores with the highest Employee Retention rates enjoyed double the sales and 55% higher profits than the 20% of stores with the lowest Employee Retention rates. Organizations that have employees who are highly engaged deliver better financial results than those that don't!

According to a new survey, only 21 percent of workers worldwide are engaged, which means they are 'ready to expend some extra effort at work', while 38 percent are disengaged. Leaving 41% of employees 'engagement' in the balance and who are potentially ready to be engaged with, using the right motivation, events and resources.

After a series of 22 workshops for a Swiss Client who put some 600 staff through the programme delivered by PJ Stevens over a 12 month period; employee engagement was audited to have doubled, proving our industry is a highly effective partner for businesses.

Engagement is not satisfaction or happiness, but the degree to which workers connect to the company emotionally, understand how to add value and are willing to take that action, states Consulting firm Towers Perrin, which surveyed almost 90,000 workers in 19 countries. "There is a definite link between engagement and a company's financial performance," adds Managing Director Julie Gebauer.

So, what makes for an engaged employee? It's not necessarily pay. While the level of pay is important, it's not among the Top 10 Motivators. What employees are looking for is open communication, communication that reflects the fact that senior management really understands how the work gets done, and that recognises and appreciates the individual's efforts.

So what has this got to do with Corporate Hospitality? Corporate team building, hospitality events, away days and investments in employees' well-being and personal development are amongst ways of demonstrating appreciation of employee's contribution and value. When a company invests in its staff, the staff are free to invest in the company. In an upcoming year that looks likely to be tough on businesses, investing in quality Corporate Hospitality and Teambuilding Programmes is more important than ever.

By organizing effective hospitality events, motivational conferences and teambuilding programmes that genuinely develop communication skills and build *winning relationships* with staff and senior management, companies can make a significant impact on staff engagement and therefore customer loyalty. And loyal customers in turn create bigger profit potential, not matter how tough the market.

About the author:

PJ Stevens is director of LEAPplc.com, a top trainer and people development expert, and has been in the business for over 12 years.

LEAP delivers a range of Outstanding Teamwork Programmes, Motivational Events, Corporate Team Building programmes, Conferences and *Winning Relationships* Workshops in the UK, Europe and Middle East, which directly impact on People, Performance and Productivity.

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