



TIGERS[®]
S U C C E S S S E R I E S

How to Ensure Your Team Training Transfers

Introduction

Roaring out of a recession should be at the top of most employers' minds, especially as cutback, layoffs and downsizing led to so many people without jobs. Managers may have felt that those who were left with a job were grateful for the work and contributed to increased productivity. But this has not been the case for many employers. Employee disengagement levels have reached an all-time high.

“This paper explores strategies and systems to improve training transference.”

So what can managers do to combat disengagement? The solution begins with identifying the problem within the organization through careful research and employee opinion surveys. The best way to determine if

employees in the organization are disengaged is by asking them, and an anonymous survey allows employees to give honest feedback without the fear of repercussions.

But surveys are only one step to the solution. How you act on the information is crucial to achieving your management goals and improving employee engagement. For example, if training is indicated, it takes resources to develop the training and a method to deliver it. However, employers that toss training at employees will not reap the rewards of improved performance or employee skill development if training fails to transfer.

This paper explores strategies and systems to improve training transference.





Problem

Working out of a recession, leaders are forced to change their strategies and techniques to keep up with the changing work climate and to keep pace with their competition. Compounding the issue, the Gallup State of the American workplace 2010-2012 report¹ found that 70 percent of employees are not meeting their full potential. Of that 70 percent, 52 percent of employees are not fully engaged, and an 18 percent are actively disengaged. Disengaged employees may also harm employers in other ways, such as in the form of working against the organization's interests, being less productive, stealing, negatively influencing others, missing work or driving customers away from the business. This issue not only affects individual organizations, but the economy as a whole.

"The general consciousness about the importance of employee engagement seems to have increased in the past decade," says Jim Harter, Ph.D., Gallup's Chief Scientist, Workplace Management and Wellbeing. "But there is a gap between knowing about engagement and doing something about it in most American workplaces."

¹ Survey: <http://www.gallup.com/businessjournal/162953/tackle-employees-stagnating-engagement.aspx>

Gallup states that there are three types of employees: engaged, not engaged and actively disengaged. Engaged employees are the employees that have passion for what they do, feel connected to their organization, move ideas and the organization forward and drive innovation. Not engaged employees –the reported 70 percent – put in the time, but do not have energy or passion for their work. Actively disengaged employees – the dreaded 18 percent – are unhappy and actively acting out that unhappiness, which affects the productivity of the engaged employees.



Engaged



Not Engaged



**Actively
Disengaged**

While it may seem that disengaged employees are simply a slight nuisance within the workplace, this is simply not the case. Disengaged employees are extremely costly for organizations, and they bring down the productivity of those around them.

“Disengagement not only affects individual organizations, but the economy as a whole.”

“Gallup estimates that actively disengaged employees cost the U.S. \$450 billion to \$550 billion in lost productivity per year. This is troubling as American business attempts to recover ground lost during the financial crisis and reach prerecession levels of prosperity.”

But just worrying about the bottom line and cutting costs at every opportunity will not solve the issue. Employers must put their employees first and actively engage their workforce to solve the problem.



“There is a silver lining for any company that gets engagement right. Gallup’s extensive research shows that engagement is strongly connected to business outcomes essential to an organization’s financial success, including productivity, profitability, and customer engagement.”

Solution

A successful organization is more than just profits and the bottom line. Leaders in successful organizations understand that their employees are their greatest assets and allies. So to create a workplace culture that ensures team training is beneficial and not wasted on “unfaithful” employees, successful managers track employee satisfaction, initiate change that is sparked by the findings and follow up to determine if the effort was successful and there is proof of that in the organizational bottom line. To perform these duties, consider the following:

1. Focus on principles that promote high performance teamwork and collaboration
2. Asses the workplace culture
3. Implement teambuilding activities to achieve results (training or team interventions)
4. Implement employee development plans and follow through with coaching

Focus on Principles That Promote High Performance Teamwork and Collaboration

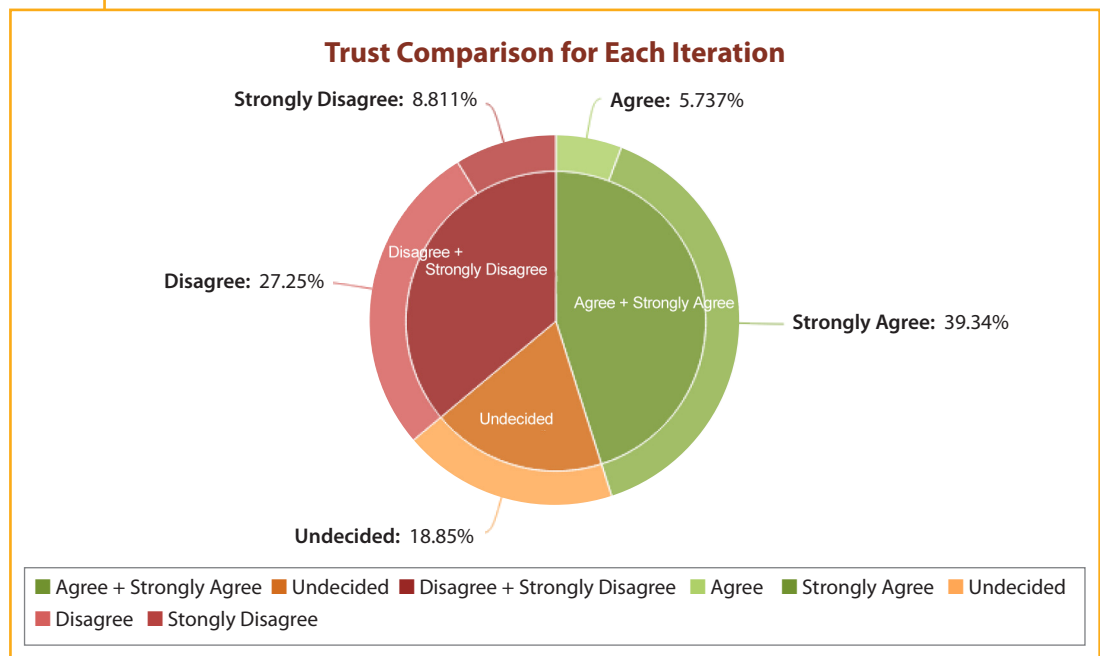
The TIGERS® six principles for promoting collaboration and high performance teamwork are trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk and success. Each principle individually improves cooperation, but all six principles are synergistic resulting in the highest form of collaboration to support your organizational vision, mission and values.

Leaders benefit from assessing these six principles in order to know what is required to form cooperative and productive teams throughout all levels of the organization. A reliable 360 team survey is the best way to identify how the six principles are showing up within an organization.

The TIGERS® Success Series Online Team Survey (<http://www.TigersSuccessSeries.com>) offers leaders the opportunity to get a baseline reading of the six principles within their organization, as well as guidance with measureable strategies on how to improve collaboration and productivity. Two more comparison surveys then track the team’s progress, while offering suggestions for further team refinement. The key to the success of the survey sequence is the follow-up leading to incremental team

improvement. To implement lasting changes within the organization, first identify the level of trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk and success within the group's dynamic. Second, identify behaviors that support or frustrate the six principles and then track the results of training and development initiatives over time.

When progress is tracked, leaders are better prepared to offer specific training for the areas that need improvement. Team members are able to receive this training when they need it most and when it is most beneficial to their growth. Following up with an employee improvement plan is beneficial for both the short term and the long term, and it ensures that new skills and attitudes transfer after the change initiatives are implemented.



The survey offers insight and strategies for the following areas:

Trust². Interaction Associates' Building Trust in Business³ survey found that since the 2008 financial collapse, trust in the workplace has declined every year (while remaining stagnant in 2013). This research shows that while businesses may be rebounding, employee trust is still missing from the equation. This is an important component to lack, especially since the survey also found that:

High-performing organizations that placed higher value on customer and employee relationships were able to retain key employees while increasing profits by 5 percent or more from the previous year.

2 Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/work-environment/trust-is-a-key-ingredient-missing-from-business-team-building/>

3 Survey: http://interactionassociates.com/sites/default/files/research_items/Building%20Trust%202013.pdf

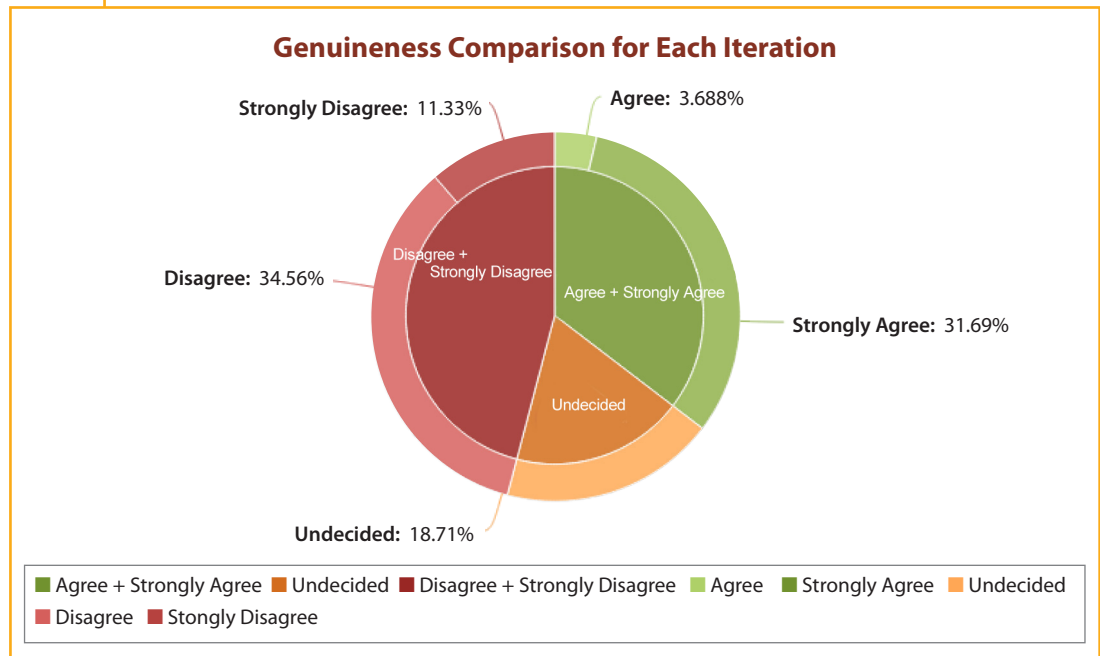
- Trust eroded among team members in low-performing organizations that focused on cost-cutting initiatives.

“High levels of trust equals high performance,” said Linda Stewart, CEO of Interaction Associates. “If you look at the lower-performing companies, in all cases they had lower levels of trust.”

“High levels of trust equals high performance.”

Interdependence⁴. No organization can stand alone, especially since the nature of business is to work with others. Not only do businesses rely on their employees, but they also rely on vendors, customers, stakeholders and many other people to perform daily tasks. Because of this, a culture of cooperation is essential to drive creativity, innovation and success.

Genuineness⁵. Authenticity and truthful interaction among leaders and employees make the difference between successful interactions and disruptive ones. Genuineness in the workplace leads to several positive outcomes, including:



4 Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/uncategorized/interdependence-is-the-backbone-of-cooperative-team-work/>

5 Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/uncategorized/genuineness-in-the-workplace-how-essential-is-it-to-team-work/>

“Leaders who focus on and promote empathy in the workplace benefit from improved cooperation in all processes and initiatives throughout the organization.”



- Successful problem solving
- Transparency
- Improved communication
- Increased productivity and engagement
- Reduced suspicion resulting in less projected conflict

Genuineness can be achieved through many avenues, including:

- Training to become more forthright and straightforward in a timely way
- Sharing experiences and personal stories that illustrate the points you want to make
- Asking permission to be honest and straightforward before rendering an observation or critical comment that is intended to help a coworker to be more successful
- Offering genuine acts of self-expression, such as letting someone know that you feel defensive; that you are reacting to what has been communicated to you and that you need to settle down before continuing; that you feel angry; or that you feel disappointed
- Actively listening to and acknowledging those around you for their contributions

Empathy⁶. The idea of genuinely connecting with team members has already been expressed, but this cannot be achieved without empathy. Empathetic leaders are able to recognize others’ emotions, giving them the ability to make a connection with others and relate to them, which is essential for an organization’s success. Leaders can show empathy by:

- Leading by example
- Listening to understand
- Performing employee surveys to gauge the mood of their organization and then doing something about it
- Offering emotional intelligence training
- Hiring new staff based on capacity for empathy
- Promoting empathetic employees who have become proficient in conflict resolution

Leaders who focus on and promote empathy in the workplace benefit from improved cooperation in all processes and initiatives throughout the organization.

⁶ Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/work-environment/replace-a-cut-throat-work-culture-with-an-empathetic-culture-to-spark-engagement/>

“Employees should feel safe to explore how to resolve problems in their own work units...”

Risk⁷. Risk may sound like a bad word for business, but without it, none of the greatest discoveries, innovations or progresses would exist. Risk is essential for growth, and there are some steps to take to remove the stigma associated with risk:

- Focused teambuilding exercises - Activities and exercises bring employees and leaders together, strengthening their relationships, trust and cooperation, making it easier to become proactive and supportive when mistakes are made rather than reactive in the corporate arena.
- Leading by example - Leaders who want their employees to think outside of the box need to do the same, and be transparent with the results, good or bad.
- Training - Onboarding employees with the proper training on how to do their jobs well, as well as how to relate effectively with others within the culture frees employees to achieve productivity faster than employees who lack this support.
- Leadership support - Employees should feel safe to explore how to resolve problems in their own work units and leaders should offer consistent support in removing barriers to employee success when they have the power and resources to do so.
- Risk resolution - Employees should commit to working together, utilizing good group norms and processes and understanding that mistakes happen. When mistakes surface, analyze what went wrong and identify what can be done differently in the future. This means that employees benefit from proper training in root cause problem solving and decision-making. This results in an organization that can learn and grow rather than suffer the repercussions of perennial conflict and repeated mistakes.
- **Success⁸.** Define what success means for your business and what it means to your employees. Employees across the country are searching for positive, engaged and employee-friendly work cultures, which organizations can achieve by:
 - Recognizing that their employees are valuable human beings that bring the mission of the organization to fruition
 - Offering teambuilding activities that produce improved productivity and employee skills
 - Creating a sense of community
 - Building morale
 - Hiring the right people
 - Creating a culture of “we” and “us”

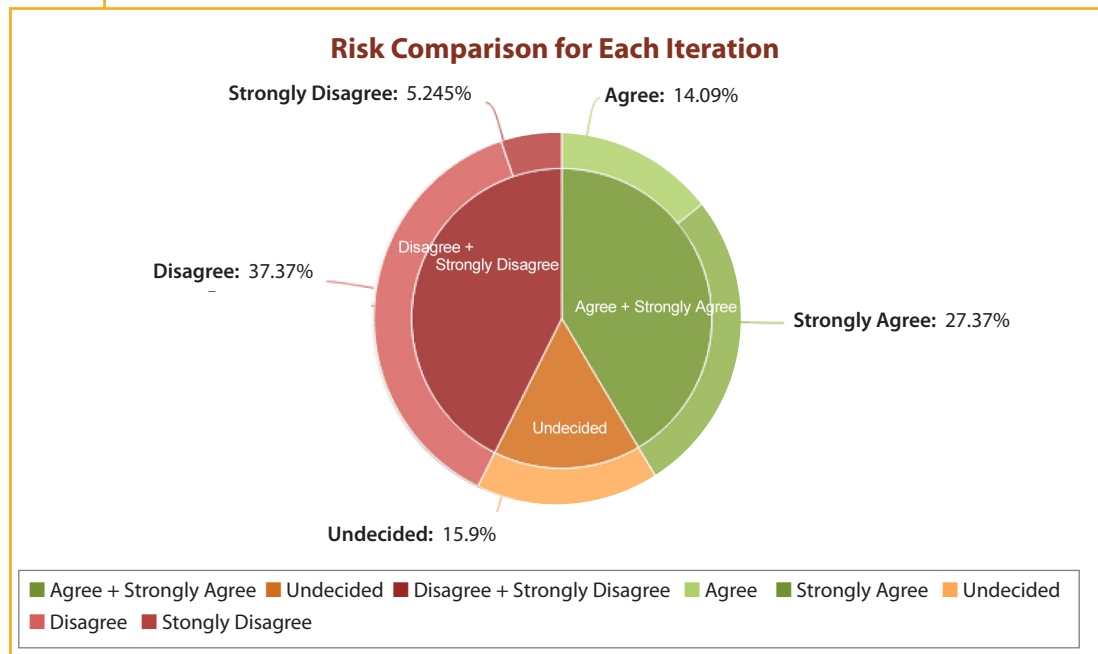
⁷ Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/collaboration-encourage-risk-taking-to-bolster-team-building-success/>

⁸ Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/work-environment/seven-tips-to-build-business-success-through-team-work-and-employee-friendly-work-cultures/>

- Recognizing successful teams
- Sharing success with all employees

The biggest benefit of creating an employee-friendly work culture: happy employees are productive employees. This is also good for profits and the bottom line.

Assess Workplace Culture



Work-life balance, company culture, leader and employee personal fears and struggles and relationships between employee and employees and leaders affect productivity, progress and overall organizational success. The first step in addressing an issue is acknowledging that an issue exists and then defining what it is. To glean a reliable view of where employees currently stand, the TIGERS® Success Series Online Team Survey offers three progressive surveys to identify the employees' baseline and to track progress over time, all while offering valuable insights for just in time team training opportunities and strategies for improvement.

Accept change as an inevitable⁹. Change is constantly occurring, and no organization is safe from it. The best way to address change is by acknowledging it and tackling it head on. But one major factor that keeps employees and leaders from accepting change is fear. Fear takes root from experience, and the most common reasons to hold back ideas include:

⁹ Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/work-environment//are-employees-fearful-of-their-own-good-ideas/>



- Saving face - Employees may not share their ideas because of fear of looking inadequate or for fear of repercussion. Managers must create a culture of acceptance and critical thinking by opening the lines of communication, without knocking down others' ideas. Or at least by making suggestions for improvement, without making the employee afraid of sharing other ideas in the future within the structure of an accepted critical thinking problem solving process.

“Training that opens safe and fruitful discussions about behavior that promotes high performance teamwork can pave the way for employees to champion change.”

- Lack of progress - Employees get excited when they see that their ideas hold value and could potentially solve real issues in the workplace. But when the ideas fizzle and do not lead to change initiatives, the employees want to understand why their ideas did not go any further. If they do not receive further communication and feedback on the issue, they probably will not offer more ideas.
- Organization lacks a clear mission - Employees offer the best ideas when they have a clear understanding of the organization's mission, goals and



directives. Without guidance on these issues, employees do not know how their ideas can make a difference, and which ones do not apply.

When fear is removed from the equation and is replaced with critical thinking procedures, employees are better able to offer ideas, contribute to the organization's goals and offer substantial problem-solving solutions.

Focus on achieving a work-life balance¹⁰. While some managers may want to ignore employee work-life balance concerns, ignoring these concerns is a big mistake, as rising concerns lead to higher employee turnover rates, which are costly for organizations, and they greatly reduce overall productivity.

Hay Group Insight's research¹¹ of work-life balance found that employees were more satisfied with their compensation and held greater confidence in their organization's ability to recruit top talent when they perceived work-life support.

"Organizations across the globe continue to ask their employees to 'do more with less,' leading to increasing dissatisfaction with work-life balance," said Mark Royal, senior principal at Hay Group Insight. "Tactical solutions like telecommuting options or flexible work schedules will not be enough to successfully address these mounting concerns. Organizations must also focus on long-term solutions to work-life balance issues by helping employees work more productively and identifying opportunities to begin rebuilding their workforces. By providing enabling work environments and additional people resources, organizations can help employees accomplish work tasks as efficiently as possible, leaving more time to attend to personal responsibilities and garnering higher levels of organizational loyalty."

Focus on a culture of support¹². Incivility and hostility from leaders to their employees and between employees is not an effective strategy to encourage employees to meet goals that increase productivity, but unfortunately, many managers have taken this stance. And because the culture seems to reward this hostility, many managers ignore written policies that encourage employees to address these hostile work environment incidents before they bloom into lawsuits. While some organizations may encourage incivility, this type of culture overall leads to:

- Unresponsive employees
- Arguments
- Low morale
- Absenteeism

¹⁰ Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/work-environment/rising-work-life-balance-concerns-tied-to-employee-turnover/>

¹¹ Research: <http://www.haygroup.com/us/press/details.aspx?id=37015>

¹² Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/work-environment/todays-workplace-dynamic-a-culture-of-bullies/>



- Increased customer service complaints
- Expensive employee lawsuits

To change the culture, leaders must first identify that incivility and hostility have taken root in the workplace; then create a clear definition of what constitutes incivility, hostility and bullying; and implement a grievance policy for employees to follow. Teambuilding activities that open safe and fruitful discussions about behavior that promotes high performance teamwork and behavior that will cause predictable problems can pave the way for employees to champion this change initiative.

Implement Teambuilding Activities

While teambuilding activities that improve employee skills or improve work performance create a better company culture and offer an effective platform for change initiatives, they also offer the surprising benefit of improving employee retention.

Put recognition initiatives high on the priority list¹³. Organizations that utilize employee retention programs enjoy the benefit of employee turnover rates decreasing by 22 percent, according to a SHRM/Globoforce Employee Recognition Survey¹⁴.

“By simply having a recognition program, companies experience higher retention rates and a better view into employee performance. It can shake the tree of a company’s talent and uncover hidden leaders,” said Eric Mosley, CEO of Globoforce. “But once it’s really amplified – properly funded across the entire organization – a social recognition program can truly

13 Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/work-environment/the-proof-that-employee-recognition-results-in-improved-retention/>

14 Survey: http://go.globoforce.com/rs/globoforce/images/SHRMFALL2012Survey_web.pdf





energize a company and its culture like no other HR program.”

And organizations need only invest as little as one percent of payroll to recognition programs to enjoy the benefit of better employee engagement, retention rates and stronger financial results.

“Employees will not feel invested in your organization if they do not feel they are supported.”

Foster “real” relationships¹⁵. Keeping employees invested in your organization is a key element for its success, but employees will not feel invested in your organization if they do not feel that they are supported and understood by their leaders or have good relationships with their peers. Employees need to feel respected and connected to the company and to peers to remain loyal to the organization. This means that connection, respect and consideration are measured and tracked in organizational behavior. Factors that keep one employee happy and coming back to work may not work for another, so focus on fostering real and individual relationships with your employees to keep them satisfied with and faithful to your organization.

¹⁵ Original article: <http://www.corevalues.com/cooperation/creating-and-sustaining-employee-fidelity-in-the-workplace/>

Implement Employee Development Plans and Follow Through with Coaching

Focusing on the principles that promote high performance teamwork and collaboration, assessing the culture and implementing teambuilding are great beginning steps to implement change within your organization. But without employee development plans and follow through with coaching, your change initiatives will come to a halt.

“As with any type of training, consistency is essential for the training to be successful.”

An employee development plan may be a formal written document, but it can also be a simple and regular sit down among leaders and employees. The leader needs to have a personalized conversation with the employee, offering advice on performance. If an employee is not meeting expectations, or if that employee is doing well in the current position but not advancing,





a simple conversation with a leader can make all of the difference. If employees do not understand how they can improve, they cannot fix the problem. By implementing these talks, both leaders and their employees benefit in both the short-term and the long-term.

As with any type of training, consistency is essential for the training to be successful. But when employee development plans are ignored, employees tend to experience more dissatisfaction with their positions and are more likely to leave¹⁶. Some reasons that employers may not implement employee development plans include:

- Leaders are focusing on the present, rather than the future. Managers may focus too much on daily tasks and forget to implement long-term initiatives.
- After spending so much time conducting surveys and collecting data, some leaders may feel that there is little time left to implement changes based on the results that they have found.
- Leaders may put long-term goals on a lower priority level than other tasks, leaving little time for follow-up.

While there are many excuses that leaders can use, if employee development plans and coaching follow-up are implemented, leaders may find that:

- Employees care more when they feel that their leaders are taking a genuine interest in their development. Employees find value with training, coaching and mentoring programs and are more likely to stay in a position if they feel they are receiving this type of formal development.
- Plans and follow-up lead to higher senses of loyalty, which also translates to higher productivity.
- Talented employees want to advance, and they want to become more valuable to their organizations. They seek employers that can offer this type of career development.

The important thing to remember when implementing employee development plans is that these plans should be individualized, and managers should take time to understand and work with their employees one-on-one. These programs do not work when they are forced, or if employees feel that they are receiving the same generic advice that every other employee is receiving. After employees are offered development plans, follow-up is crucial. Training, coaching and mentoring programs need to be in place and consistently followed for employees to feel that they are valued within the organization and that they can improve their performance in order to advance.

¹⁶ Article: <http://www.forbes.com/sites/victorlipman/2013/01/29/why-development-planning-is-important-neglected-and-can-cost-you-young-talent/>



Summary:

How to Ensure your Team Training Transfers

Risk to organizational sustainability has reached critical mass. Problems such as employee disengagement and the lack of enough skilled employees to fill the positions of retiring United States employees all point to training solutions. However, simply tossing training at employees does not ensure that what was trained will transfer to improved skill levels, better behavior, or improved productivity.

The best way for leaders to combat these issues is by focusing on the six principles that build collaboration and high performance teamwork, assessing the workplace culture, implementing teambuilding activities, implementing employee development plans and coaching. A team survey is the best way to identify how the six principles are working within the organization, as employees are able to candidly share their thoughts and opinions without fear of repercussion. By measuring the quality of the six principles through a team survey, leaders are able to assess the organization's level of collaboration strength and pinpoint with good accuracy training and team interventions that would be most valuable for employees and improvement in the work culture, which plays a major role in the success of an organization.

When assessing the level of collaboration and work culture, leaders should first accept that change is inevitable. Change is always occurring, personally and professionally, and when leaders do not acknowledge this change, they are less equipped to handle arising issues. Leaders should create a culture devoid of fear, where employees feel comfortable sharing their ideas and engaging in productive conversations with management. Focusing on work-life balance and a culture of support are other important aspects to consider when implementing and then anchoring change.

But identifying that there is a problem is only the first step to the solution, as organizations must then learn to implement teambuilding activities to achieve results while focusing on the TIGERS[®] six principles of trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk and success. The importance of teambuilding activities goes beyond improving employee skills, as these activities also lead to higher employee retention rates. Leaders should focus on fostering real relationships with employees that go beyond just civility in the workplace.

After leaders implement change within the organization, creating employee development plans and following up with coaching are vital. Employees will better meet expectations and grow in the direction that you need them to when they understand what is expected of them. Leaders can implement

Steps:

1. Identify which of the TIGERS(R) six principles need reinforcing.
2. Implement teambuilding activities (training).
3. Implement employee development plans.
4. Apply coaching and mentoring.
5. Track and measure skills and behavior improvement.

formal training, but informal and personalized conversations can go a long way in employee development. Employees will feel that their growth is important to the organization, and leaders will benefit from focused employees who understand the improvements that need to be made.

Risk and change are ever-constant within organizations, but perceptive leaders who focus on their employees and invest in development will come out ahead.

“...offer training when it is needed and appreciated most so you are able to develop employee improvement plans with follow-up to ensure transference.”

About the TIGERS® Success Series Online Team Survey

Reliable team survey tools are essential for avoiding predictable and unnecessary pitfalls that organizations repeatedly face. The TIGERS® Success Series Online Team Survey is designed to help you gauge your teams' behaviors early and often, so you can address any potential performance issues before they disrupt your goals.

In this way you can offer training when it is needed and appreciated most so you are able to develop the employee improvement plan with follow-up to ensure that new skills and attitudes transfer.

The TIGERS® online survey utilizes a thorough approach that identifies the team's opinion of its level of trust, interdependence, genuineness, empathy, risk and success and how each relates to the others for effective company teambuilding and timely training. After extensive validation testing for a period of four years, with 257 people in 17 intact teams in the first study, and over 1,000 participants in 30 school buildings in the second, the survey proved to reveal the current status of a team, as well as prescribe training and predict future team behavior.

Each survey serves as a bucket that holds three survey iterations so you can track your team's progress over the course of three years or more. The first online survey acts as a baseline, identifying team strengths, as well as areas for improvement. Two comparison surveys show progress and help you



connect this progress to your organization's bottom line. The survey is ideal for teams of eight or more people and for a small company of up to 250 employees. So it is appropriate and cost effective for department review.

For more information about the TIGERS® Success Series Online Team Survey and how it can help your organization, visit <http://www.tigersuccessseries.com/> or call 541-385-7465.



About the TIGERS® Success Series

For over two decades, TIGERS® Success Series and TIGERS® Founder Dianne Crampton have helped organizations such as Costco, AT&T, and Boeing realize a workplace culture of team member cooperation with overwhelming, sustainable success. Through innovative leadership teambuilding events and teambuilding activities, TIGERS has given these companies and other organizations the resources to not only thrive, but to be among the elite, preferred employers. TIGERS now licenses HR Executives with organizational development duties and independent consultants in the use of TIGERS organizational development proprietary resources. Learn more at <http://www.corevalues.com/> or call 541-385-7465.



15 Credits Hours

The use of this seal is not an endorsement by the HR Certification Institute of the quality of the program. It means that this program has met the HR Certification Institute's criteria to be pre-approved for recertification credit.

About TIGERS Success Series Live Events

TIGERS offers Leadership Clinics to help leaders build company-wide problem solving teams for resolving complex organizational issues. Where 60 percent of new teams fail, *The Six Principles That Build High Performance Problem Solving Teams* leadership clinic takes leaders through a systemized and strategic team development system that transforms the failure that most teams face into successful and strategic outcomes. Learn more at <http://6Principles.corevalues.com> or call 541-385-7465.

A promotional banner for a leadership clinic. The background is blue. On the left, a group of four business professionals (three women and one man) are gathered around a table, looking at a whiteboard. The whiteboard has some diagrams and text on it. The text on the banner reads: "Leadership Clinic: 6 Principles That Build High Performance Teams For Collaborative Problem Solving". Below this, it says: "Learn how to build and leverage successful problem solving teams for corporate change and business growth initiatives." At the bottom right, there is a black button with white text that says "Get Clinic Details Now!" and a white play button icon.