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# The Silver Fox Advisor

Helping business leaders build value since 1986

March 2013



Dear Ginger,

Welcome to the Silver Fox Advisors monthly newsletter, "Profit Building Ideas", which has been developed as informative reading material for business owners and managers.

We hope you will find this newsletter to be interesting and valuable to your business.

Silver Fox Advisors

## Employee Engagement - Key Drivers

### Executives Top Challenge

In our previous issue, we discussed Employee Engagement; what it is, what to do, and questions to ask. This article will focus on the "Key Drivers" of Engagement.

*Employees that are engaged are top performers and should be rewarded. Incentives for a job well done have proven to boost morale and increase engagement.*

While employee surveys make it possible to identify engagement, it does not pinpoint organizational improvement very well. There are many factors that will help increase employee engagement known as "Drivers."

These drivers, when managed correctly, will help a company effectively manage the levels of employee engagement.

Drivers such as clearly defined goals, vision, culture, management & peer relationships, career development & opportunities, performance feedback, communication, rewards & recognition, and trust are some of the elements that enable employee engagement.

Here are some points (in no particular order) to consider as you look to increase employee engagement:

Organizational Goals & Vision - Everyone within the company need to know the overall vision, direction, and their part in achieving that direction. Make sure everyone has specific, measurable, attainable,

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Silver Fox Advisors

Silver Fox Advisors are current and former business owners, entrepreneurs and executives dedicated to assisting business owners to improve their enterprises through mentoring and consulting. Advisors have been sharing their knowledge, experience and skills for more than twenty-five years.

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realistic, & time targeted goals that are congruent with the company goals. This is a must for successful companies.

**Job Clarity** - Employees must know what is expected of them and to have the tools necessary to do their jobs. When employees don't know exactly what is expected or have the basic materials / tools needed to complete the job, resentment or boredom kicks in and they may lose the focus on how to help the company succeed. It is important to give employees everything they need in order to be successful.

**Job Perception Of Importance** - Employees must know & perceive the importance of their job. This is vital to their overall attitude, loyalty, and customer service. This may be the most important factor of all.

**Career Improvement Opportunities** - Employees should be given opportunities to better themselves through training & advancement. Provide support, direction, and growth opportunities to the employee looking to better themselves.

**On Going Feedback** - Many companies really fail here. Feedback is a key driver to let employees know how they are doing. If they are doing a good job, tell them! Say "Thank You" when you catch them doing something right. Many times companies that have a bonus structure think that by giving them a check, it is enough. Often times what an employee really wants is to hear "Thank you for doing a great job." I am not stating that bonuses for a job well done should be discontinued: I am saying that it is not the sole driver. Just ask your employees.

**Excellent Working Relationships With Superiors, Peers, & Subordinates** - Top performers have great relationships with their managers, staff, & peers. If they have a bad relationship with their boss, then no amount of incentives will keep them performing at the highest levels.

**Effective Communication** - Often poor communication leads to lack of trust, disengagement, and internal destruction starts to occur. Employees that perceive poor communication do not have a clear description of "what's going on." When that happens, it may cause a sense of doubt, poor performance, and you will no longer have an engaged employee. Keep everyone in the loop and focused on goals, achievement, and success.

**Integrity, Ethics, & Values** - A core set of values should be understood by the entire staff. This set of values will help in the decision making process when challenges or problems arise. When these are clearly defined, everyone will come up with the same answer / solution to any given situation. Everyone must "walk the talk" from top to bottom. This is the most important driver of them all.

**Reward Engagement** - Employees that are engaged are top performers and should be rewarded. Incentives for a job well done have proven to boost morale and increase engagement. Put a program in place that works within your industry and communicate it to everyone. But you must follow up on this program or it will become very destructive and counterproductive.

There are many aspects to employee engagement and we hope this list will help you to enhance engagement within your company. †

Need help? Contact us today for more information!

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## Planning, Planning, Planning

If you don't know where you are going, than any road will get you there! You must plan,



## Positive Thinking Produces Positive Results



Just as someone can affect your attitude, you can influence your attitude as well as the attitudes of those around you. How? With affirmations! An affirmation is telling yourself that 'you can' instead of 'you can't'. An affirmations is a positive statement which describes the 'you' you want to become.

Affirmations should have the following criteria:

1. Affirmations should be positive
2. Affirmations should be statements in the first person, present tense
3. Affirmations should be related to your goals
4. Affirmations should be within the realm of possibility (realistic)

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execute, and measure.

Who's going to do the planning?

Whether the plan is for your entire company or just one department; you must make sure to get input from multiple levels.

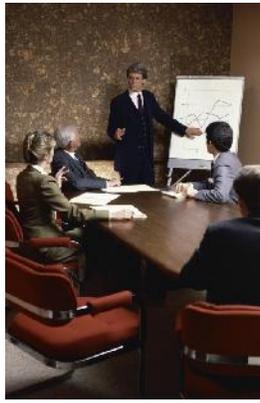
Get your entire team involved in developing plans for the team, project, department, or company. As the leader you should be the most integral part of the process. Assign aspects of the planning to those closest or most knowledgeable to the each particular phase. Coordinate the process and make decisions based on the overall strategy and core values.

Often the leader will engage a strategist to guide the company through the process and the development of the plan. This has proven to be very effective.

The people who are closest to the work, and are responsible for implementing the plan should be directly involved in the planning. Strategists can facilitate the process, but if the plan is going to work, the people responsible for its success should be a part of the planning.

Get started today by clicking on the link and downloading our Planning Worksheet or use it as a guide for creating a customized worksheet specific to your organization. t

[Planning Worksheet](#)



*"Tell me, I will forget.  
Show me, I may remember.  
Involve me, I will  
understand."  
~ Chinese Proverb*

*"Let our advance worrying  
become advanced thinking  
and planning."  
~Winston Churchill*

## The Benefits Of Being Positive

By learning positive thinking techniques and putting them into practice throughout every aspect of your life, you can achieve many internal and external benefits.

The internal benefits that come from adopting a manner of positive thinking are a positive attitude, belief in alternative possibilities, creative thinking, better problem solving skills, confidence, focus, determination, satisfaction, and feelings of achievement.



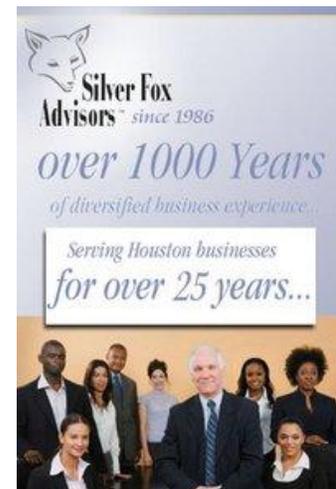
Positive thinking leads to a positive attitude simply because thinking about the positive traits and aspects of your life causes your brain to operate in a "feel good" state. By constantly thinking positive thoughts, your brain is trained to look on the bright side of every situation, which in turn causes you to feel satisfied with your current position in life.

Positive thinking also leads to a positive attitude because it keeps your mind busy. If your mind is busy concentrating on positive thoughts, it is extremely difficult for it to dwell on negative thoughts at the same time.

Positive thinking also leads to a belief in alternative possibilities by its very nature. When faced with what seems at first glance to be a no-win situation, positive thinkers have the natural ability to look outside of the facts for off-beat or less conventional solutions. This ability to look past the obvious facts opens more doors and possible outcomes for both personal and professional situations. t

Are you staying positive in your life for success? Call today to see how we can help!

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