



leading learning



Einblau
& ASSOCIATES LTD.

Developing Human Assets

Building relationships to increase engagement

Issue 3

Leading Learning is a publication celebrating Einblau & Associates' 20th Anniversary.

From professional experience and psychological principles we know that human beings do not form bonds based purely on logic. People become dedicated to – or aligned with – individuals and organizations whose values are consistent with their own and whose actions appear to be in line with those values. Such relationships lie at the heart of “employee engagement”; that is, the degree to which workers are committed to their jobs.

Further, even in this highly impersonal and electronic world, the best way to build engagement is through people, not technology. Human emotion and interaction remain the fastest and most powerful way to motivate people.

The impact of engagement generally shows up most strongly in employees' relationships with customers. Customers may switch among brands and suppliers based on a special price or other offering, but will come back – or stay firm in the first place – based on relationships with the people at the other end of the transaction. That means your employees can either turn on or turn away your customers.

Despite this evidence, even many of the great organizations still neglect the source that most supports positive customer interaction. The Gallup Organization reports that while about 70% of customers' buying decisions are based on positive
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Harriett Lemer
Vice-President

Vision, Courage & Knowledge:

Leadership Lessons From Within

During the past twenty-four years I have had the opportunity to work with leaders from many different industries. As a result I have observed several core attributes leaders share that contribute to their business success. These attributes seem to be universal in that they apply across industries and individuals. And they are definitely meaningful to me as well, as a business owner for the past 20 years.

First, leaders possess a combination of both personal vision and courage. Every high-achieving business person I've known has had a strong vision which is a manifestation of their personal values. It takes courage to be guided by one's personal vision and to act in accord with it when difficult decisions need to be made. Vision without courage does not move forward, courage without vision is aimless.

As business leaders we put our most personal principles on the line. They are inextricably tied to what we do for a living. For me, alignment between my personal values and my professional activities is the foundation for my energy, motivation and commitment.

As an example, I believe that commerce has an integral role to play in creating a socially responsible world. This causes me to examine the things I do as a business owner and consultant. Like an internal compass check, the questions I ask myself flow from a need for synergy between what I do for a living and who I am in the world.

Further, as a reflection of the vision Ron and I hold for our business, we continuously examine the alignment between what we believe as individuals and as business partners, and how these beliefs are given voice through the professional services offered by Einblau & Associates.

Another attribute shared by successful leaders is their desire to gain knowledge and to use it as a foundation for decision making. In our firm, we support this by striving to provide information to our clients from a wide variety of sources, and in diverse ways ranging from experiential learning to the written word to interactions with others.

It is a privilege to assist our clients in their pursuit of knowledge and also to help them to trust and depend upon the knowledge they already possess. We have dedicated ourselves to helping people become aware of what they need to learn and to also draw out the wisdom that lies within them. After all, that's what the word educate means in the original Latin; educare – to lead or to draw out. I hope this explains the theme we chose for our 20th anniversary year - *Leading Learning*.

For all the opportunities to learn from our clients and colleagues that we have had over the past 20 years, I am truly thankful. And I am grateful to have found a role in life and in business that continues to fulfill my sense of obligation to make commerce a socially active and socially responsible endeavour.

Wishing you all the very best for 2006 and beyond.

Harriett Lemer, Vice-President



Carol J. Sutton
Master Trainer

Congratulations Harriett and Carol!

Harriett Lemer has recently completed the EQ-i certification course. She is now qualified to administer the Emotional Quotient Inventory which provides an individual with information about their level of emotional intelligence. This inventory will be a highly complementary tool for Einblau & Associates' leadership coaching services. Please contact Harriett for more information.

Carol J. Sutton successfully completed the Conflict Resolution Certificate program (negotiation) at the Justice Institute of British Columbia. She is now qualified to assist clients to achieve constructive communication in contentious situations. Please contact Carol for more information.

Service excellence leads to customer delight

It's all about building relationships

There is a distinct difference between serving the customer and satisfying the customer, says Einblau Master Trainer Denise Wallace. The former is defined by the service provider – “I did my job” – while the latter is the purview of the customer – “Wow, the job was great and the person went the extra mile!”.

Today, merely serving is not enough. We need to meet the customers' needs, exceed their expectations and build the relationship in order to delight them. Staff skills are key to improving interactions with both internal and external customers. Enhanced communication skills that create moments of magic and leave positive lasting impressions show customers that we care about them. Do it right and customer loyalty is the reward.

If we want to keep them coming back for more, we must first appreciate that customers experience our organization in two ways. The first is through the services and products for which they come to our organization; the second is the way in which they are treated when our staff delivers those services and products.

Today's customers are much more sophisticated, knowledgeable, and demanding than ever before. They know they can get what they want from just about anywhere in the world, any time of day or night, through any number of providers.

Top quality products and services are no longer negotiable; they are the baseline of customer perception. What makes the difference between you and your competitor is the way in which the products and services are delivered. The customer's perception of the experience is the determining factor. It is in the personal interaction – face-to-face or over the phone – where the potential to delight them lies. Customer service is no longer a department, it's an attitude.

The world of customer delight offers a win/win/win proposition: Your staff discover increased job satisfaction. Your customers benefit by staying with an organization they can trust to deliver what they need, while being delighted by your staff. Your organization enjoys the productivity of satisfied employees and the consistent revenue of delighted customers.

Denise Wallace presents an unparalleled Service Excellence program, designed to help organizations delight customers by building a staff attitude that brings them back for more. Her experience spans customer service, sales, performance and technical skills areas. Her expertise lies in the design and delivery of customized training programs that motivate individuals, teams and whole organizations to improve productivity and profitability. She is committed to providing programs that produce results and to providing service with integrity.



Denise Wallace
Master Trainer

“How companies act toward employees largely determines how well employees will serve customers.”

Jeffrey E. Disend, *How to Provide Excellent Service in Any Organization*, Chilton Book Co., 1991.

Soft Skills for Performance Excellence

Leadership includes non-technical competencies

At Einblau we know that there is an array of soft skill competencies crucial to excellent job performance. The competencies vary between companies and among positions based on internal priorities. An internet-delivered position assessment called Performance DNA® helps clients determine the critical competencies for a particular position.

Employers are able to make hiring decisions more easily using the Performance DNA®, since each assessment prioritizes the top non-technical skills, and provides behaviour-based interview questions that match each of the skills.

Performance management and performance reviews are easier and more effective when positional competencies are consistently established throughout the organization for each job. Employees receive optimal input and the firm gets the best value for its investment.

Of the 23 essential non-technical skills evaluated by the Performance DNA®, we frequently see seven particular competencies in leadership position analyses. (See *Seven Top Leadership Skills*, right-hand column.) Even though the hierarchy of essential soft skills changes based on the job and the requirements of the organization, these are often placed at the top of the list.

SEVEN TOP LEADERSHIP SKILLS

1. **Self-Management** - effectively manages emotions and impulses.
2. **Leadership** - inspires others.
3. **Creativity/Innovation** - challenges established routines.
4. **Goal Orientation** - recognizes and acts on opportunities.
5. **Conflict Management** - readily identifies and addresses issues.
6. **Futuristic Thinking** - connects the dots to see the big picture.
7. **Persuasion** - builds trust and credibility.

For more information, see http://www.einblau.com/dna_profile.html

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human interaction with sales staff, most companies dedicate a miniscule 10% of their developmental resources to ensuring that positive human interactions can take place.

Recently, Gallup also reported on the high cost of lost productivity, showing that only 29% of the U.S. workforce is actively engaged, 55% is not engaged, and 16% is actively disengaged: more than two-thirds of US employees are just showing up and business is operating at about one third of its capacity. The cost attributable to the 16% (actively disengaged), is approximately \$350 billion per year; the total for this group plus the 55% could be as high as \$1 trillion. Clearly, disengagement affects the bottom line.

Building relationships to increase engagement is a management responsibility that rests on communication ability and execution. An organization's leadership sets tone, direction and action. Its reward and recognition systems must support the high ideals and good intentions found in vision,

mission, and values statements if such documents are to have a genuine life of their own. The talk must be lived in daily operations and relationships.

Gallup's work supports their statement that, "The single most important variable in employee productivity and loyalty is not pay or perks or benefits or workplace environment: it's the quality of the relationship between employees and direct supervisors." That makes communication a key behavioural competency.

To back up their belief in how important communication is to achieving tangible business results, Einblau now offers a unique, facilitated strategic communication process. The Manager is the Medium™ shows participants how to reduce the time wasted by miscommunication; lower employees' resistance and gain attention, and how to focus on behaviour to get results.

Please contact Carol Sutton for information about The Manager is the Medium™ at carolsutton@einblau.com

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We welcome your comments. If you would like to have additional copies of Leading Learning, please contact us.

Ron Einblau, *President*
Harriett Lemer, *Vice-President*
Rachelle Lee, *Manager, Calgary Office*
Carol J. Sutton, *Associate*
Denise Wallace, *Associate*

Einblau & Associates Ltd.
Suite 1400
1500 West Georgia
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6G 2Z6

T 604.684.7164
F 604.873.8256
E office@einblau.com
W www.einblau.com

EDITOR

Carol J. Sutton APR, Fellow CPRS and
Master Trainer

DESIGN

Serge Bédard
Bédard Design Communications

Capacity and communication lead HR scene

"It is no surprise that human resource management is springing to centre stage in organizations," claims the Conference Board of Canada *. Based on work of the University of Michigan, School of Business Administration, the Board details eight strategic issues; this is the final instalment. (For previous instalments, visit www.einblau.com/cool_stuff.html)

5. Organizational capacity must exceed the rate of change in the business environment.

Competition today is actually among the training and development processes of various organizations. At high-performing Pepsico, the CEO personally drives the agenda. Learning cascades throughout the company. It behoves HR professionals to create learning organizations.

6. Get ready for a heterogeneous workforce, and make diversity a living value.

Within the next 10 years or so, some 20 per cent of Canada's population will be composed of visible minorities. Only organizations who esteem diversity will be able to draw fully upon the talents of all their staff.

7. Line managers must communicate effectively with employees.

Workplace communication is about how we get work done in organizations; not just emails, but face-to-face – in good times and bad. From implementing a change in direction to delivering performance feedback, communication defines a manager's many roles.

8. Measurement leads to credibility; make measures meaningful.

Accountability: To be a credible senior management player, HR – like all the other functions – must be able to demonstrate ROI. Rather than measure activities, such as the number of people hired, demonstrate the quality of those hires: How well do they help the organization innovate, or deliver other desired capabilities?

* Hot HR Issues for the Next Two Years; <http://www.conferenceboard.ca/humanresource/HR-briefing.pdf>