

# 4 Ways to Bring the Best Out of Your Employees

by Efrat Peled, Chairman and CEO of Arison Investments

A GREAT LEADER KNOWS THEIR BUSINESS'S MOST VALUABLE ASSET IS ITS PEOPLE. HERE'S HOW TO DRIVE THE GROWTH OF YOUR COMPANY'S HUMAN CAPITAL.

The most important characteristic of successful business leaders today is the ability to embrace, inspire, and manage their organization's human capital. Now more than ever, employees drive success by identifying with the company's values.

It's all about connecting to meaning, rather than regulating execution. The business leaders creating the most impact are those who recognize and manage their employees like the valuable assets they are.

Based on our experience at Arison Investments, we have learned that if you build meaningful purpose and positive impact into your day-to-day decisions, unexpected and effective solutions come from your people on the ground. To move forward, we embrace our employees' individuality, and make the benefits of their unique perspective, knowledge, and passion available to everybody through their businesses.

Note the following four key principles for driving professional growth. We find effective teams are highly attuned to the company's values, and are capable of sustaining the business for the long run.

## 1. EMPOWER CHAMPIONS BEFORE OUTSOURCING TALENT

Before hiring consultants, understand that the best brainpower usually already exists within your organization. By harnessing this brainpower and unlocking the potential from within, you not only reveal the quickest road to positive results, you show employees the company believes in them.

To begin, identify champion managers making day-to-day decisions across all the company's divisions. Ask for their opinions—both formally and informally—and empower them to submit ideas and plans on how to solve issues facing the organization.

## 2. LET PEOPLE INNOVATE, OWN, AND SHARE

Once managers and employees know the company values their contributions, encourage them to begin new conversations with others around values. Urge them to meet and brainstorm together in forum work that serves as a kind of open-source platform. Encourage cross-pollination between

departments—such as sales, finance, client services—between disciplines, and across industries, including banking, construction, nonprofits, and cultural entities. This requires managers to come up with practical action plans for arriving at their proposed solutions.

As a leader, embrace these plans and incorporate them into the company's overall strategy. Show that you can merge the day-to-day, on-the-ground work with the company's broader vision. Once a plan is in action, share that knowledge across the organization. This way, a larger sphere of influence is created, expanding best practices across the entire organization. Procedural lessons can increase efficiency in many capacities, and ultimately boost the company's bottom line.

### **3. BUILD TRUST**

Find the right way to pass responsibility between all levels in every work group. Distribute duties and have different people take ownership of different initiatives in your corporate social responsibility branch—one to volunteering, another to sustainability, and others to giving. Employees can stretch their minds in ad hoc projects assigned to them outside their mainstream positioning, and they are uplifted by applying new knowledge to unexpected frontiers. They then see the organization from a fresh angle, trusting in the company's commitment to seeing them succeed in a broader scope.

This approach is particularly effective among millennials. By earning this level of trust, employees will be more motivated to bring their passion to the table, and apply this passion in ways that will push the business forward.

Most importantly, put people with passion to work. Encourage them to bring their personalities into their projects, even when their style of action is completely different from yours. If you see that a particular assignment makes a difference in people's hearts, there's no better team for the project. This is about connecting rather than regulating, and businesses transform by unlocking potential from within.

Senior managers at Bank Hapoalim in Israel encourage employees to initiate progressive solutions for resolving debt collections and exceeded credit lines by:

- Identifying the individual needs
- Understanding the customer's perspective and situation
- Tailoring the best solution together with the customer

The result is a win-win for all involved. Employees are more motivated, they retain more customers in the long run, and the bank has a 50% reduction in accounts directed to its collection department. Around 70% of the bank's customers are young people.

#### **4. REWARD PEOPLES' SENSE OF PURPOSE**

Employees add financial value to a company and it is imperative to acknowledge this by compensating them accordingly. This is not just about salaries; it's about establishing the right structure for annual employee assessment that takes into account recognition for the personal set of values they bring in for their thought patterns.

For each action plan, create an index of milestones that will allow you to encourage and show recognition, creating a direct link between human capital, positive performance, and sustainable success. Show and communicate that employee ideas have been adopted by the company. A key element in rewarding is to give a platform where people can expose their thoughts, present their ideas, and share their innovations, values, and action with colleagues.

According to the *KPMG Global Construction Survey for 2015*, most organizations now routinely consider diversity in their hiring practices, but this typically covers gender, race, and culture. More enlightened employers are also seeking diversity of a different kind—of cognitive thought.

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