



EMERGE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY, LLC

How Senior Leaders Can Get Much Higher Engagement Levels From The Next Generation of Workers

By Maureen Ross Gemme, MS Ed.

The short answer: Train them. Lead them. Engage them. Turn them into leaders.

Recent History

Ten years ago when the Millennials were beginning to enter the workforce there was a crash in the economy. Companies were failing. The market was crashing. Real Estate boom was over and our country was basically bankrupt. It was not a good time to make money for most businesses and many Babyboomers were either cut, let go, forced to retire, or were just ready to retire. Since 2008, on average a Babyboomer (born between 1945 – 1964) retired every 8 seconds and that trend continues.

Besides downsizing people, companies also cut expenses in other ways. One of the first things normally to go when a company needs to cut costs is to reduce investments in people for the most part. Education and training budgets get slashed.

Online Training Goes to a New Level

When this happened in 2008 and the smart phone was brand new and people turned to the internet and online training to get their learning needs met. YouTube was introduced and experts took advantage of the medium by creating a wealth of knowledge. If you needed to know "how to do" something, you could look it up on YouTube and learn it.

And when help was needed as far as human capital goes, businesses hired the inexperienced worker at a far lower cost than the older staff that had left their organizations. The knowledge that walked out the door is extraordinary. This gave birth to frustration on behalf of companies who lost that experience.

Millennials

Here we are 10 years later and 50 million Babyboomers in the US have been replaced by the younger generation, Millennials, born between 1981-2000. A generation that was raised on Social Media and learning on YouTube. Many also have advanced degrees in higher education.

As business in general recovers and the economy gets a little better, many leaders are again investing in their people with training. Actually, the training never stopped when it came to educating new employees on their company's products, services and new systems but much of what used to be done in the classroom had been done online with people sitting at their desks.

Employees attend webinars and this fails often because they continue to work their tasks on the side, paying attention only when they have too or when a facilitator calls on them or asked to answer a polling question.



The Problem with the Online Training Solution

This way of training is just as expensive as getting people in a room because it actually takes longer for people to learn since they are not paying attention and therefore, they make mistakes. When mistakes are made, normally the training program is blamed and many times the program needs to be repeated until the employee gets it right, further wasting time and resources.

Also, the soft skills training like relationship building, communication skills, conflict management and leadership development often got pushed to the side because of the budgets. The companies that flourished invested in their leaders and it is often the case that they are the leaders in their market.

Face to Face Classroom is Experiential Learning

When it comes to reading body language, facial expressions, developing relationships and focusing on getting to know people and how they think and what motivates them, the next generation has a huge deficit because of this online training trend from the last 10 years.

The classroom training trend is returning and all generations are getting the experiential learning they need to build relationships and actually practice new skills. Many companies who are co-located, like healthcare, manufacturing and high tech industries are back in the game and they are seeing much higher levels of employee engagement because of it. I've trained almost 1500 employees on leadership skills in 2017 alone and I can tell you that they LOVE it.

The Benefits

The benefits of face to face training, where people can discover, discuss and practice concepts and skills to build their competencies is priceless. Even the introverts are often grateful to have the safe environment to come out and participate.

I often run a series of 5 classes, one a week for five weeks, to teach a variety of leadership concepts and competencies and supervisors say they can see results right away especially when it comes to building trust.

When a leader shows their direct reports that they care, can listen with empathy, assess an employee's willingness and skill level to do a job, they can begin delegating and coaching in a much more efficient way and the employees begin to thrive.

The number one reason most employees give on exit interviews for why they left is because of a bad boss. When they feel they have a caring manager, they tend to stay.

Create good bosses and people stay with the company. Turn your bosses into leaders and you reduce turnover. Create managers who can manage conflicts and grow their people and you develop not only trust but foster respect and loyalty which increases productivity.



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Collaboration Breeds Employee Engagement

Getting people together in the room to learn and collaborate together, across all generations, bonds them, and creates peers who support each other and speak the same language of leadership. Then everyone benefits and the company thrives.

It's a no brainer. Invest in your leaders and you create much more loyal, committed and happy workers who work for them. When your leaders truly represent the best they can be they represent your brand and create more engagement and loyalty.

About the Author



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Before launching her successful business as a dynamic speaker, educator and leadership mentor, Maureen Ross Gemme, enjoyed a 27 year career at a Fortune 200 company. After experiencing a major life transformation in her 20's, Maureen learned early on what it takes to advance and grow in a highly matrixed business organization.

During her corporate years she was recognized for her expertise in process management, leadership, training and communications. Maureen has a breadth of experience including leading remote training teams, rolling out multi-million dollar technology systems training across the enterprise, improving processes and documentation in all 13 departments she worked in and managing large scale leadership events.

Maureen began her entrepreneurial journey in 2013 when she launched her venture to train and develop leaders who want to make an impact. Maureen is passionate about helping her clients overcome their fears, develop their confidence to present their ideas solidly and lead others so they can live up to their full potential and move their business forward faster.

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