



5 Minute Strategic Mindset

“Throughout my career, if I have done anything, I have paid attention to every note and every word I sing - if I respect the song. If I cannot project this to a listener, I fail”

— Frank Sinatra



Something I knew, but needed reminding of

It's still shocking for me to read research that tells me this: “Managers account for 70% of the variance in engagement” (Gallup, 2015). Put simply, when people stop working hard, and then ultimately leave, comes down to just three words: “Bosses don't care”.

I'm working on two projects right now that have the objective of dramatically improving employee performance and engagement. One of my recommendations to both organisations is instead of exit interviews they should conduct 'stay interviews' where employees are asked (by their managers) questions like "What motivates you to stay here?" and "What would excite or interest you more?".

Not everyone answers entirely frankly, but in my experience this process gives enough new information to help leaders keep their best people from leaving.

Question: What would happen if you conducted 'stay interviews' with your direct reports?

An 8 Step Change Manifesto

Because of COVID-19, many of my clients are asking, “What have we seen in the past 60 days that we want to preserve as future BAU?”. The answers are often profound insights about customers (e.g., their willingness to receive services digitally), or about staff (of a group of 35 staff I surveyed this week, only 6 wanted to return to work in the office).

These insights lead to tremendous change pressure for those organisations that will succeed in the Darwinian post-lockdown world. Consequently, with a couple of clients, we've been creating a 'Change Manifesto', to help leaders articulate their role in change, and their ability to communicate it.

Here are some of the items that have resonated strongly:

1. People have a natural impulse for improvement
2. They seek out leaders
3. They want to participate in something worthy
4. They want to understand
5. More change isn't better, but a handful of the most critical changes are
6. A good idea is enough to start with, but that's all it is
7. People can't be compelled to change, only invited to join you
8. Groups and entire institutions have volition, so use it

Question: Do you agree with these? What would you add?

Social engines

Think about the three 'engines' of progress in the last thousand years. The Religious Engine of the Middle Ages replaced warring tribes with monotheism and religious orders. Over the top of this, the Economic Engine emerged in the 18th century, spreading industrialisation and commerce to the corners of the globe.

This Economic Engine superbly solved old needs that had been around for millennia: relief from want (e.g., mechanisation created cheap food and clothes); authority (e.g., police forces and judiciaries protect us from crime), order (e.g., dangerous activities like driving and drinking become regulated) and certainty (e.g., mass produced goods with reliable standards).

But, our infinitely more complex 21st century problems (like obesity, or under-employment, or mental illness epidemics) require us to have new solutions that are neither religious, nor economic, but social. So, we need 'social engines': ways to harness large-scale human ingenuity in flexible ways. There are literally millions of 'social engines' emerging, from social banks to 'social prescribing' volunteers connecting lonely people to community activities, to 'for purpose' media organisations.

One of the most famous of the latter is, of course, [TED Talks](#), where the formula is an often-magical 18 minutes in which a leading scientist, researcher, designer, mogul or explorer distills a lifetime's work or presents a powerful point of view. Originally - and still - a conference, TED's talks get hundreds of million views a year through millions of recommendations via Facebook and Twitter (that's way more than the online educational content of most American top-shelf universities put together).

Furthermore, anyone can set up a TED event themselves and there are more than 1000 TEDx conferences globally. Finally, user-engagement is increased by ensuring that as many people as possible can hear these 'ideas worth sharing': more than 3000 volunteers have translated 10,000 videos into more than 77 languages, with a potential audience of over 2 billion.

Such “Social Engines” as TED also recognise the complexity of their end-users' needs by aggregating these skillfully: setting up specialist TEDs (like TEDMED for health and TedEd for education) and helping participants network. What these delivery methods do superbly is understand that only a part of the value chain is economic, the rest is social.

Question: What 'social engine' could amplify the impact of your work?

And, please send me your feedback by email to ah@workwell.com.au.

Which bullet above is your favourite? What do you want more or less of? Other suggestions? Let me know!

Have a wonderful weekend, all.

Andrew

Andrew Hollo wins the international award for the Society for the Advancement of Consulting's **Consultant of the Year 2020**



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