



Engaging Employees Is Hard Work—Here’s the Secret to It

Picture yourself smiling and shaking the hand of a new employee on their first day of work. You’re excited because, well, you hired them. They could be a completely new hire or someone who moved to your team from within the company. Regardless, imagine you feel pretty good about them. After all, they came to you with an impressive resume, solid experience, and glowing recommendations.

You think to yourself, “What could go wrong?”

Now imagine things going wrong. Slowly but surely, you watch this employee burn out, underperform, and under deliver. Picture them showing up late, bored out of their mind, and dragging down the rest of the team with their negative attitude. Imagine yourself frustrated when, after months of non-productive work and hours of training, this new employee quits or is asked to leave.

At this point, you ask yourself a different question, “Was there anything I could’ve done to prevent this?”

The answer, of course, is “Yes!” We’ll even toss an exclamation point in there for good measure. In his work on employee engagement, world-renowned HR analyst Josh Bersin lays out **five basic conditions** necessary for employee engagement. In this post, we’ll explore Bersin’s five conditions and how PXT Select™ helps companies meet them.

Let’s get started.

The State of Employee Disengagement

Here’s the thing about disengagement—it’s a hard problem to fix. Writing for *Harvard Business Review* in March 2017, Jacob Morgan points out that, although companies have spent hundreds of millions of dollars on engagement programs, engagement scores have remained incredibly low.

Drawing on data from more than 350,000 respondents, Gallup's "[State of the American Workplace](#)" survey discovered that 30% of employees are engaged, 52% are disengaged, and 18% are actively disengaged. If we represent the American workforce as a ten-person bicycle, then three people (the engaged employees) would be pedaling the bicycle. Five people would be pretending to pedal (disengaged employees), and two people (the actively disengaged) would be jamming the brakes.



How far do you think this team will go?

Overall, actively disengaged employees cost the U.S. between \$450 billion and \$550 billion each year in lost productivity. That's close to the annual [Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\)](#) of Thailand or Poland. To get their workforces moving, organizations need to address engagement. It's not just a buzzword or a biking metaphor. It's a necessity.

Five Conditions for Employee Engagement

In boosting employee engagement, a little focused effort in a few specific areas can go a long way. That's the premise behind Josh Bersin's five conditions for employee engagement. How can PXT Select help organizations meet these five conditions? We explore that question next.

#1. Meaningful Work—Establishing Strong Job Fit

Helping employees find meaning in their work starts with matching them to positions they're likely to succeed in and enjoy. We call a successful match, "Job Fit." To establish Job Fit, PXT Select begins by gathering information on an employee's personal characteristics—such as their cognitive abilities, behavioral skills, and motivational interests. Then, PXT Select helps employers match the characteristics of the employee to the characteristics of the job. The more characteristics a person has in common with those required to do the job, the higher the level of Job Fit. Match the right person to the right role, and you get an employee who stays with an organization for longer and who is less likely to quit. That adds up to savings in time, money, and stress.

#2. Hands-On Management—Create Strong Managerial Fit

People don't leave their *jobs*. They leave *managers* who fail to support them.

According to psychologist Michelle McQuaid, most Americans feel unhappy in the workplace. McQuaid reports that 65 percent of American workers would take a new boss over a raise if

given a choice. McQuaid also found that 55 percent of workers feel they would find more success in their roles if they had a healthier relationship with their boss. It's safe to say that, by focusing on hiring and supporting capable managers, a company can take serious steps towards curbing disengagement and boosting employee retention.

By collecting information on how employees think and work, PXT Select assists managers in onboarding, coaching, and developing employees. PXT Select might, for instance, provide information that helps a manager have an expectation-setting conversation. At the same time, a manager could use insight from the PXT Select reports to help an employee establish goals or a career development plan.

When managers fit their roles and feel supported by the right tools, they can better support the individuals they manage. And that, in the long run, leads to higher employee engagement and lower turnover.

#3. Positive Work Environment—Strong Culture Fit

To bring out the best in employees, you need to foster a healthy culture that allows employees to be at their best. That's where supportive and productive teams play an especially valuable role.

As collective units, teams carry the social force to create, spread, and develop healthy work culture. But even high-performing teams encounter challenges. Conflict, lack of alignment, and personality clashes often hinder teams in their ability to spread and support a healthy culture.

To meet this challenge, PXT Select gives managers information that allows them to assemble teams out of people they know will work well together. There's no need to toss individuals into a team setting and hope for the best. Through the information it collects on each individual, PXT Select helps organizations build teams that achieve results and promote healthy culture along the way.

#4. Provide Growth Opportunity

For organizations aiming to increase engagement, giving employees room to grow can make a significant difference. Top-performing employees enjoy a good challenge, the chance to solve problems, and opportunities to develop new skills. They prefer to keep the door open to personal and professional advancement.

Think about it—if an individual wants to advance in their career, increase their job security, and improve their marketable skills, they're going to want plenty of opportunities to grow, learn, and develop while on the job. They want resume-building experiences to help them succeed in their current role *and* in opportunities that pop up later. So, when organizations fail to provide talented employees with opportunities for development, those employees often seek growth

opportunities elsewhere.

Placing gifted workers where they're most likely to succeed is the first step to retaining employees. Giving them opportunities for growth is the next part of the equation. By offering insight into a person's interests and strengths, PXT Select helps organizations determine which development opportunities their employees need to meet their professional growth goals. If you want to keep talented employees, you have to give them what they want. PXT Select takes the guesswork out of that process.

#5 Trust in Leadership—Provide Leadership Development

Here's the truth about leadership—*anyone* can lead. Leadership isn't a title. It's not earned through degrees or determined by the neighborhood you grew up in. Leadership is a mindset *and* a skill set that can be taught and learned.

PXT Select allows organizations to support the development of leadership skills within teams and individuals by focusing on the development of the Six Critical Leadership Skills. These skills include the ability to create a vision, develop strategies, ensure results, inspire people, be approachable, and mentor others. Again, these are skills that anyone can learn. PXT Select facilitates the learning process by helping employees realize what they do well and what they need to focus on in order to grow as leaders. Having the right information can make all the difference.

Imagining a Different Outcome with PXT Select

Knowing what you now know about PXT Select, imagine yourself once again shaking the hand of your new hire during their first day on your team. This time, as you watch them shake hands with one of your team members, you think, "I know I made the right choice. Thanks to PXT Select, I had the right information to make it. And I have the insight to support this new hire well into the future." That's precisely the sense of confidence PXT Select is designed to deliver. How's that for a cheery image?

Talk to us to try a complimentary PXT Select assessment and discover the power of this talent management solution for yourself. You can do better than imagining the value of PXT Select. You can experience it. **Contact us @ info@livetolearninc.com**

Source: PXT Select™: A Wiley Brand

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