



It's About People, Not Process
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ENGAGE: What Not to Do

We've been working with ENGAGE for a while now, but do you know some of the biggest pitfalls to avoid? Here are a few slightly exaggerated examples.

Lack of Preparation

(Scene shows supervisor surprising team member while opening the refrigerator to get lunch)

Supervisor: Let's ENGAGE!!

Lack of Attention of Interest

(Scene shows supervisor and team member increasingly preoccupied with other items)

Supervisor: So uh, wanted to talk about goals.

Employee: Hmm? Goals?

Supervisor: Yeah, yeah, uh, you uh working on any lately?

Employee: Yeah, yeah, they're great. Good Goals.

Supervisor: Ah, okay, good,.uh I'm glad they're going well.

Employee: Hmm? Hmm?

Poor Body Language

(Scene shows supervisor spinning in chair, lack of eye contact and team member with arms crossed)

Supervisor: Uh anything going on this month? Anything noteworthy?

Employee: (silent)

Supervisor: Last month things looked like they were...I don't know...pretty good. Uh...

Employee: Oh really?

Supervisor: Yeah...yeah, I think that uh meeting you were in last week, you did a pretty good job with.

Employee: That wasn't me. That was Ted.

Not Timely with Comments

Supervisor: So the report you did for the department turned out really good.

Employee: Thanks. Which report was this? When was that?

Supervisor: Hmm...that one uh...about a year ago.

Employee: A year ago?

Supervisor: Maybe 3, but you rocked it!

Not offering recommendations

Employee: There's a situation I'm dealing with that I'm really hoping that you have some solutions to suggest because I don't know what to do. My unit leader isn't really working out and I'm not sure if you can give me some suggestions on what I should be doing to make this situation better? I mean I'm trying really hard and I tried to make sure that my team is on board with all...

Supervisor: That sounds really good. Sounds like you're handling this really well. Um...We'll talk more about it next month. It is taco bowl day at the cafeteria! Let's go!



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Not listening and pushing through conversation

Supervisor: Matt, I'm glad you could make it here today. Wanted to talk to you about your goals.

Employee: Goals? Goals? I got tons of goals.

Supervisor: Wonderful. Wonderful. Wonderful. That's all we have for today. Thanks for coming to your ENGAGE meeting.

Not Providing Feedback or Just Sticking to "Doing good!"

Supervisor: You doing good?

Employee: Good.

Supervisor: Good?

Employee: Good.

Supervisor: Great.

Focusing on Day-to-Day

Supervisor: So I wanted to talk to you about your professional development. Specifically...

Employee: Oh, I finished pulling all the staples you asked me to do, from those reports.

Piling on

Supervisor: I have just a few critiques I wanted to go over. First off, the report that you did last week, you didn't get it in on time. Uh, needed to be submitted...Aaand, I noticed that you were 10 minutes late for the meeting with Jaime last week...so you forgot to check that the laptop that you didn't display a PowerPoint. You gotta check the video drivers before. And uh, I noticed your cube, uh...I can't even walk through it. I'll be polite- it's disgusting. Another thing, you need to feed the office fish. It's not going to be around long if you don't.

Defensive or Dismissive

Supervisor: So, I would really like you to give the idea a try.

Employee: Nah, I don't wanna. No.

Supervisor: Sure?

Employee: Yeah, I'm sure. Not going to do it. (laughing) No.

Supervisor: I'm sorry, you were kind of rude to customers.

Employee: You're rude to! And you always get the biggest piece of cake on snack day, too!

Insincerity

(Scene shows supervisor with checklist and turns on a tape recorder when the team member sits down)

Supervisor (previously recorded): Hello Jim. Let's begin.

Employee: I'm Matt.

Supervisor (previously recorded): Today Jim, we're going to ENGAGE.

Employee: I'm Matt.

Speculating about Motive, Intent, or Attitude

Employee: I am so sorry I'm late.

Supervisor: Yes, you are a few minutes late. And from that, I can deduce, that you do not care about this meeting, you do not care about your co-workers, and you do not care about this job. What do you say about that, sir?



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Employee: Well...it was just a few minutes. I was in the bathroom.

Not using your Notes

(Scene shows supervisor and team member each display a copy and watch a frame of the movie, The Notebook)

Supervisor: Matt, thanks for coming to our monthly ENGAGE meeting. First question I have for you, did you bring your notebook?

Employee: Don't you mean, The Notebook? So are we going to talk about my goals?

Supervisor: Shh...this is my favorite part. Later. Later.

As you saw, the scenes in this video may have been a slight exaggeration of what team members and supervisors might experience. Here a few things to keep in mind to make the most out of your monthly conversations.

- Be prepared and schedule time in advance to reflect on the items that need to be covered.
- Be attentive. Devoting about 20 minutes to the meeting and making the conversation the highest priority.
- Be mindful of your posture, tone, and other non-verbal signals that might detract the open, honest environment you're trying to create.
- To have the greatest impact, use specific and timely feedback. Offer recommendations and take the time to problem solve together.
- Listen to each other. Don't interrupt consistently or push through your agenda items. This impacts your ability to develop a trusting relationship.
- When meeting try to dig a little bit deeper than sticking to "Doing good!"
- Make the conversation about the person's improvement. Daily tasks should be saved for another time.
- Identify and focus on a few goals rather than everything at once.
- Be receptive to feedback because the reality is we can all do something better.
- Be sincere and take an interest in the person you're engaging with.
- Avoid speculating the person's motives and attitude. Stick to the observed behaviors.
- And lastly, be sure to use your notebook and capture your progress toward your goals. Right Jim?

Employee: I'm Matt!