HOW TO MAGNETISE
YOUR WORKFORCE

In a rapidly changing, uncertain, more complicated, and volatileworld, Leaders are faced with many challenges when it comes to attracting andretaining their workforce.

Globally, there is a shortage of quality staff, where the demand for skilled workers is highly competitive. Hence a key challenge for Leaders in all business sectors is attracting and retaining employees with the skills and expertise they need to succeed.

Fostering a Magnetic Workplace is the responsibility of Leadership – not HR.It requires an intentional approach under four key strategic elements:

- Attract
- Engage
- Develop
- Retain

Engage

Develop

Attract

Retain

Culture

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Principal RYP International Pty Ltd March 2023

- David Stewart

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MAGNETIC WORKPLACE & CULTURE

A magnetic workplace is quite simply a place where people want to come and work, and staff want to stay. In a new post COVID era, it is clear the social contract with staff has changed, but also many traditional attributes that attract and keep staff have been reaffirmed. Creating a Magnetic Workplace is the role of a Leader.

Whilst there will need to be many tactics and strategies to attract and keep staff, the fundamental **drawcard for attracting new staff, and gravitational force for retaining existing staff is CULTURE.**

Culture is a living breathing element that permeates all aspects of an organisation. It reveals itself in the way leaders talk to and acknowledge people, what is ignored or tolerated by a leader, what is rewarded and recognised, the lived service experience of customers, what is measured, what is deemed as acceptable performance, the espoused values and behaviours that are endorsed and enforced at all levels, the attitudes of managers and staff to problem solving and achieving work standards.

Culture is what holds a team together. It is based on shared values and principles, accepted behaviours (written and unwritten), a commitment to a shared purpose, adherence to beliefs, the adoption of team rituals and disciplines, and a symbolic commitment to the measures that matter.

Culture is the Environment in which your Strategy and Brand Promises either thrives or dies
Shaun Parr

WHAT ARE THE EMERGING TRENDS

Research conducted by Resume Builder.Com – in a Survey of 1000 Business Leaders – HRD Article by Dexter Tilo Oct 2022 in the second half of 2022 – suggested the following:

9 out of 10 Employers will require employees to return to the office with some frequency

✔ 13% suggested they wanted their employees back full time
✔ 40% said they wanted their employees back four days a week
✔ 31% said they want them to return three days per week

96% of Business Leaders highlight the benefits of having staff at work include

✔ Improved Communication (55%)
✔ Fosters Creativity & Problem Solving (50%)
✔ Productivity Benefits (48%)
✔ Company Culture (39%)
✔ Employee Management & Oversight (31%)

● **88% Said they plan to use incentives to address employee hesitation** to entice employees back to work including (no research has been conducted on their effectiveness)

✔ Catered Meals (41%)
✔ Commuter Benefits (35%)
✔ Pay Rises and adjustments (34%)
✔ Improved Work Built Environment (32%)
✔ Casual Dress (22%)
✔ Team Events (22%)
✔ Pet Friendly Environment (15%)
✔ Childcare Benefits (13%)

● **74% they plan to continue some form of Flexible Remote Working Arrangements**

● **29% - 38% of staff (depending on the sector) are considering leaving.** Quality of leadership was by far the biggest trigger fuelling thoughts of leaving

THE SOCIAL CONTRACT WITH EMPLOYEES IS CHANGING

Research conducted by Forbes in 2022 highlight the following factors on what workers are seeking from their employer.

1. Clear alignment and connection to workplace purpose, values, and beliefs
2. Trusted and Respected Leaders
3. On the job learning
4. Equitable pay and conditions
5. Access to Coaching & Mentoring by Colleagues
6. Working with good co-workers with a committed Team Culture
7. Strong ESG Credentials (not platitudes)

An unwavering understanding of why the organisation exists, where it is going, and how it plans to get there enables people to align their actions, as well as to innovate, adapt, and take risks with greater confidence and commitment. This is important for leaders to understand, as it helps bind an employee to an organisation.
Dr Hakeem Hammond

The social contract with staff is changing. It is clear **FLEXIBILITY & BENEFITS** are becoming increasingly important qualities staff are looking for with their employers.

Flexibility includes the ability to:
- ✔ Work Remotely (Full time or some of the time – or as required)
- ✔ Take extended vacations
- ✔ Work Part-Time
- ✔ Work Casually or in times of Peak Demand
- ✔ Take Mental Health Days
- ✔ Adopt Child Friendly Work Arrangements
- ✔ Take Carers Leave when needed

Benefits are more intangible and are often based around the Sector the Employer is in including:

- ✔ Staff Discounts
- ✔ Ability to do Community / Charitable Work
- ✔ Learning & Development Opportunities
- ✔ Participation in Team Incentives and Activities / Eligibility for Bonus schemes
- ✔ Access to Health Care
- ✔ Employee Benefit Schemes (Health & Wellbeing / EAP Program)
- ✔ Onsite Child Care – Allowances for Child Care
- ✔ Provision of Meal allowances – Catering
- ✔ The team rituals that make work a bit of fun

The importance of the organisational Purpose, Values, and Principles have significantly increased in with the next generation of staff. Being able to connect with a higher purpose (other than just profit) is a key consideration for millennials. The Environment, being part of the circular economy, fair trading, community connection, and making a positive difference is a core value many of the next generation deem as being an important factor in their employment contract.

THE RISE OF 4 DAY WEEK:

Many sectors are trialling a 4 Day week. The structure and how this works varies greatly according to the sector. For instance, a trial in the Banking & Finance sector in the UK is reporting productivity gains by staff increasing the hours worked in a day, whilst shortening the week from 5 days to 4, but still receiving full pay. However, this is not a practical approach in other sectors such as teaching and health care.

What is clear, across all sectors, there is a rise in employees seeking 4 days (or less) employment for a range of reasons (mental health, work life balance, parenting duties, personal well-being, and learning). The message for Leaders is whether this is a permanent and increasing trend, or just a moment in time issue, especially as more and more pressure is felt by the cost of living and inflationary increases on household budgets, which may reverse the 4 day week trend. Time will tell.

How to maximise employee productivity and engagement required reimagination of how and when work gets done. Think office time, meeting time, personal work time and travel time. Team cadence and team rituals form an important part of building team collaboration and dynamics. Team adaptation is a team sport that requires practice, application, and interaction. Balancing remote working with face-to-face time requires a deliberate and intentional approach by a Leader. There is no one size fits all formula. It must be nurtured and co-designed

WHAT WILL NOT CHANGE:

Of course the above need to be supported by the Traditional Factors which attract and retain staff. These include (in no order)

- ✔ Meaningful work
- ✔ Autonomy of decision making
- ✔ Career Paths
- ✔ Salary within industry benchmarks
- ✔ A sense of belonging
- ✔ Feeling appreciated and hence a valued and trusted team member.
- ✔ A safe built environment
- ✔ Trusted and Respected Leadership

EMERGING TRENDS FOR LEADERS TO EXPLORE OR RISK MITIGATE:

At a recent Think Tank researchers and academics identified the following themes:

- ✔ Flexible Remote Working…. or Onsite Face to Face (Get Balance Right!)
- ✔ Full Time and Part-Time Working Arrangements (Case by Case – cannot be Mandated)
- ✔ The importance of Purpose to any Employee Value Proposition (Must be a connection)
- ✔ Balancing Principles V Policy Driven Culture (Autonomy V Compliance)
- ✔ Diversity in the Workplace (Every aspect – Age, Sex, Multicultural Cultural, Background)
- ✔ How to socialise teams and build alignment and familiarity (Needs practice & application)
- ✔ Wellness within the workplace (Mental health an issue for all workplaces)
- ✔ Managing Personal and Family Needs (Alignment is crucial)
- ✔ A Commitment to ESG – not Platitudes (Science based carbon targets key)

Indeed, research conducted by Darryl Hull and Vivienne Reed some 20 years ago identified that the best employers managed effectively the following 15 Drivers in the table below:

Simply The Best Employer Drivers
1. The Quality of Working Relationships (Culture)   **2.** Direct Workplace Leadership (Manager, Supervisor, Team Leader)   **3.** Having a Say (Valued and Respected Team Member)   **4.** Clear Values (Practiced and Enforced)   **5.** Being Safe (Physically, Mentally, Emotionally)   **6.** The Built Environment (Quality – Professional – Conducive to Teaming)   **7.** The Recruitment & Onboarding Process (Engaging, Motivating, Meaningful)   **8.** Pay & Conditions (Within Industry Standards and Benchmarks)   **9.** Getting Feedback (On Individual and Team Performance – Timely)   **10.** Autonomy of Decision Making (Empowered and know their decision-making levels)   **11.** A sense of Ownership & Identity (Are accountable for aiding the team success)   **12.** Learning (Are able to, and encourage to, learn on the job)   **13.** Passion (Team are enthusiastic and committed to the Purpose and Mission)   **14.** Have Fun (Are secure in Team and good socialisation within the team)   Community Connectedness (Make a positive contribution to the direct community)

These are just as relevant today as they were 20 years ago and provide a good checklist for any employer to test with their workplace and staff.

MAGETISING A WORKFORCE REQUIRES LEADERSHIP INTENTIONALITY – NOT TOKENISM
Having a quick burst of effort to recruit more staff, or throwing money to retain key staff when they announce they are leaving will never have a lasting effect. Magnetising a workforce requires a leader to intentionally pursue a strategy to Magnetise their Workforce under the four headings of

- ✔ **ATTRACT**
- ✔ **ENGAGE**
- ✔ **DEVELOP**
- ✔ **RETAIN**

A POOR CULTURE CANNOT BE MASKED.

A well written job ad and job description cannot overcome a poor team culture. A Macro Culture is made up of many Micro Cultures. Any culture is underwritten by a set of promises and commitments that are publicly made to staff and customers. They need to be aligned and in synch with the stated Purpose, Mission, and Values of the Team. However, as organisations are made up of teams, local leaders will have a direct impact on the culture and team dynamics of their team. So any stated values, beliefs, behaviours and employee promises need to be believed by the local leaders, who must endorse and enforce them within the team. If a leader is presiding over a toxic team culture, no amount of attracting or retention tactics can mask a poor culture. **Team Culture is what any Magnetised Workplace Strategy must be built from**

*Ignoring the health of your team culture is like
letting aquarium water get dirty
Torbin Rick*

The message here is before any Workforce Magnetisation Strategy Can be pursued, first check that the desired culture is authentic, obvious and recognised by all staff . Our Cultural Blueprint post COVID is a great article that provides some guidance and tips **https://www.rypinternation-al.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/The-Great-Reset-Post-COVID-Cultural-Blueprint.pdf**

FOUR PILLARS TO MAGNETISE YOUR WORKFORCE

ATTRACT – ENGAGE – DEVELOP – RETAIN

The pursuit to keep and recruit staff can be built under Four Key Headings: Attract – Engage – Develop – Retain. Each requires an intentional pursuit by Leaders over a sustained period of time in a systematic way. What does not work is ad hoc flurries of activities, or simply defer everything to the HR Department. Attracting and Keeping Staff is a Leaders Responsibility

PILLAR 1: ATTRACT

(Compelling Purpose / Aligned Storytelling / Engaging Onboarding / Widen Search)

Attracting the right talented staff is a challenge at the best of times. It is not as simple as "turning the lights back on" and asking recruitment agencies to find staff. "Magnetising" the workforce is much more than just paying on par wages. It is about a compelling holistic story.

Once a threshold of remuneration is met, what attracts staff is more about PURPOSE & CULTURE than anything else.

1. THE PURPOSE OF THE ORGANISATION IS KNOWN, CASCADED, AND AUTHENTIC

The first point to highlight is to understand the most important advocates to help attract new staff is the existing staff. They have the ability to not only TELL THE STORY of the organisation but also SELL THE STORY of their Team. The WHY is Critical.

The WHY is about the PURPOSE: Who the organisation is. What it Stands for. What it is trying to achieve. How it creates Value to the community. What its key promises are to potential customers and staff. How it is different from others in the market. What any new staff member can expect. What is expected of any staff member. A Purpose can only be revealed through storytelling. A compelling Purpose must be authentic.

To be authentic, it must be clear, easily articulated, memorable and most of all believed by staff. This will require constant repetition, alignment, linking and showcasing by all leaders at all levels of the organisation. ONE MESSAGE MANY VOICES. If the staff cannot recall and link who the organisation is and what it stands for into their own role and team, then it is not authentic.

2. ALIGNED STORYTELLING IS KEY

We live in a storytelling World. Having a meaningful dialogue within the business is a key part of aligned storytelling. There are two types of storytelling.

1.Organisation Generated: What the Organisation says about itself (Controlled)

2.Outside Generated: What others say about the Organisation (Uncontrolled)

There is a principle that helps authenticate a story – which states that typically it takes 9 touches for a story to be affirmed and believed. The 9 Touches must be aligned, professional, and factual. If not, any story risks just being deemed as "spin." This is an important strategy to understand. Research shows an initial view of any organisation is formed by an array of "touches". These include:

- ✔ Brand Reputation (What a person's initial perceptions are of the organisation)
- ✔ Website (Key messages, stories, ease of navigation, and multimedia placements are key)
- ✔ Social Media Presence (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter)
- ✔ You Tube (Video's and Key Messages Placed by Managers, Staff and Teams)
- ✔ Marketing Materials (Brochures, PDF's, Branding – Brand Story Guides)
- ✔ Advertising (Ads taken out and promoted on all platforms)
- ✔ Sponsorship (Key Events, Charities, Community Groups & Initiatives)
- ✔ PR & Industry Leadership (Presentations, Research, Case Studies & Articles Written)
- ✔ Site Signage & Symbolism (Workplace Messaging – Branding – Local Signage)
- ✔ Word of mouth feedback and experiences from colleagues and friends
- ✔ Online Reviews and feedback from others
- ✔ Recent Press and Media Exposure

Storytelling by Others (Word of Mouth) is key – This is where lived experiences of staff and customers will play a huge role in influencing initial perceptions. We all read reviews when we are thinking about booking a restaurant, hotel, or the like. Similarly reviews of staff about the organisation they work force are easily accessed.

85% OF People will believe the story of a perfect stranger over any marketing messages pushed out by an organisation.

The best and cheapest recruitment tool is the Word of Mouth of Existing Staff. Staff have their own networks and people they interact with. If you are hiring – they are a great resource to help cast for potential staff, promote any job vacancies, encourage people to apply, or indeed vouch for the character of a potential candidate (if known). Many organisations are symbolically incentivising staff who refer potential job candidates. This usually includes recognition when a potential candidate makes a short list, or is hired, and then again when the candidates induction is fully completed or they have reached their six month milestone.

3. FIRST IMPRESSIONS AND A COMPELLING ONBOARDING PROCESS ARE KEY

As the old saying goes, you only get one chance to create a first impression. That first touch is key. Creating a warm, welcoming and inviting environment for any potential candidate is an important strategy that needs to be planned, practiced, rehearsed and fine tuned so it generates interest and an immediate connection. Whilst any interview process is two way – creating that first positive impression will always leave a lasting impact (whether it face to face or online)

An onboarding process that reinforces the organisations' purpose, culture, and mission in a manner that engages, excites and is sustained over a period of time (not just a two-week induction) will have a higher likelihood of attracting and motivating potential staff.

4. FINALLY WIDEN THE GENE POOL SEARCH

Attracting staff may well require a reimagination of where to cast for potential staff. The traditional recruitment agencies and online advertisements have proven to be a poor methodology of attracting quality candidates. Gone are the days of sifting through countless resumes. It is not about volume, but about quality. A more discerning and focused approach will be required, across a range of demographics and networks. However, the first and most important step is to ensure you have a compelling story to attract potential staff based around

- ✔ **The Organisations Purpose**
- ✔ **The Team Culture**
- ✔ **Authentic and Aligned Storytelling**
- ✔ **A Compelling Onboarding Process**

PILLAR 2 ENGAGE

(Team Rituals – Autonomy Principles V Policies – Feeling Progress)

If Staff feel they are Engaged they are more likely to stay

Team Engagement is much more than a score on a survey. It is about how a Team Teams!

Engagement is what fuels the hearts and minds of staff, it requires building alignment and familiarity, and above all fuels a sense of belonging and value in all team members. Put bluntly – if staff do not feel valued or an important member of a team – they will not stay long term.

What follows are three important qualities that will help engender a sense of engagement.

1. TEAM RITUALS (Behavioural & Communication)

Do not underestimate the importance of formal and informal team rituals on team engagement. Team Rituals form the mechanism on how teams socialise, build familiarity, communicate, problem solve, foster camaraderie, network with others, and create a sense of unity. By definition, rituals occur consistently and diligently over a period of time. They form part of the modus operandi of how teams Team! They can be formal events or informal such as the morning coffee run. They are designed to engage team members and foster a sense of inclusivity and team chemistry

Team Behavioural Rituals occur at all levels of the organisation – locally in small teams, across interdependent and networked teams, and as a whole organisation. Team rituals include:

- ✔ How a team starts and ends a day
- ✔ Meal Breaks and Morning Teas
- ✔ Celebrations of birthdays, anniversaries, work milestones
- ✔ Team Meetings (Weekly – Monthly – Quarterly)
- ✔ Business Planning Cycles & Problem-Solving Mechanisms
- ✔ Social Activities and Events
- ✔ Inter – Department Meetings (to help remove silos and foster understanding and alignment
- ✔ The Review of Performance via the Measures that Matter
- ✔ Planning and Reviewing Continuous Improvement Projects
- ✔ Sharing and Celebrating wins, successes, and improvements
- ✔ Feedback loops and mechanisms to ask questions, suggest improvements
- ✔ Mechanisms to access Leaders
- ✔ Thanking and Recognising the contributions of Team Members
- ✔ Customer Feedback Forums

These are mainly behavioural activities, driven by leaders.

Equally important are Communication Rituals designed to engage the hearts and minds of staff. These need to be regular, constant, valued, and effective. This will vary but needs a blended approach to ensure communication is deemed effective. The key is to leave nothing to chance when it comes to effective communication. Some communication mechanisms include:

✔ Managers Managing by Walking around MBWA

✔ Signage and Messages on Noticeboards

✔ Email with clear protocols

✔ 1:1 Check Ins with Staff Members that are meaningful, regular and consistent

✔ Public Recognition for jobs done well

✔ "State of the Nation" updates from the Leadership

✔ Measuring and Reporting Performance Trends

✔ Easily accessible and up to date who is who in the organisation and contact details

✔ A mechanism and ability to easily escalate and communicate major issues or urgent problems

Effective Communication requires a consistent and intentional effort. Understanding, enforcing, and endorsing what works is a Leadership Responsibility. Relying on broad single electronic communications to all staff is lazy. The things that matter require constant repetition, linkage and symbolic alignment. This will help flag what is important, but moreover help develop business acumen.

The Team Rituals should be structured into an overall Team Cadence Calendar that is made public. This way everyone understands how the Team Teams!

It is through team rituals that the trust and respect bank is built with staff. This is a continuum that requires constancy and consistency of effort by a Leader

2. PRINCIPLES V POLICIES Principles guide decision making. Policies drive decision making.

Principles are important to help foster a sense of autonomy and ownership of decision making, Principles must be aligned to the Purpose, Vision, Mission, and Values of the organisation, and can readily be applied by staff in their day-to-day activities. If done correctly, the need for local supervision will fall away, as staff will be clear on what they are empowered and expected to make decisions on. Principles help provide clarity to staff on what is important, the prioritisation of decision making, and how each person can personify locally the Purpose of the Organisation.

Policies are different to principles in that they are more concrete and a specific set of instructions for all staff to follow. They are black and white and leave no room for ambiguity or interpretation.

Policies and Principles should not be confused. Principles require a leaders coaching. They are more about performance and decision making. Policies require a leader to endorse and enforce. They are more about compliance.

If staff feel they must conform constantly to a set of onerous policies and procedures, this will drive a compliance mindset and culture and will stifle innovation, creativity, and proactive problem solving

For staff to feel they have autonomy – they must understand the principles the business works by – in order to make informed decisions and practice good judgement – day in day out – without supervision.

3. FEELING OF ACHIEVEMENT & THE RECOGNITION OF IT

Nothing motivates staff more than the sense of achievement, and the recognition for it. Achievement is the number one powerful motivator of people and teams. It is a constant no

matter the starting point. If people feel achievement this always fuels feelings of hope, satisfaction, motivation, and success. These are all powerful motivators of why people stay in an organisation.

It is important for teams and individuals to know when they have had a good day and what caused this. Equally important to know and understand is what to do when there is a bad day. Regardless of the day, the actions and responses need to be aligned and linked to Team Rituals.

Achievement, and the feeling of Achievement is what motivates people. Always has!

What demotivates people is monotony. If every day is the same, or there is no feedback on performance or consequences for good or poor performance, then staff motivation and commitment will fall away. When success or progress is never felt or recognised it will fuel feelings of boredom, resentment, being undervalued, and indifference toward the organisation. When someone gets an attitude of indifference, they will always find fault.

Being part of a successful team and a valued and respected team member is the number one criteria of what motivates and keeps people at a workplace. Having feelings of being undervalued and unappreciated is the number one reason why people leave.

he one thing we learnt during COVID was the importance of leaders demonstrating gratitude and being appreciative and supportive of the efforts of workers. Thanking people and sharing achievements helped build morale, resilience, and camaraderie amongst the team

PILLAR 3 DEVELOPMENT

(Growth Mindset – Learning Journeys – Build Acumen)

Learning is everything you do – and should not be confused with training

Developing staff requires a deliberate intent by a Leader. It is about building the commitment, confidence and competence of staff so they can be empowered to make autonomous decisions without constant supervision.

I perform better when I am micro-managed –
Said no one ever!

1. A GROWTH MINDSET IS KEY

A Growth Mindset is not something demanded by a leader to staff, but rather, something nurtured and ingrained into the Cultural DNA of the Workplace. A growth mindset should form part of the curiosity of all leaders, the HR Systems and Frameworks adopted and deployed to work teams, and what is symbolically rewarded and recognised. A Growth Mindset is central to:

- ✔ Problem Solving
- ✔ Creativity & Innovation
- ✔ Learning & Development
- ✔ Personal Career Development

Team Cadence Rituals provide the mechanism to impart growth mindset behaviours and cultural disciplines into the Workplace. These are owned by Leaders. These could include:

✔ A series of Lunch n Learn Forums where colleagues share their knowledge, wisdom and expertise on specific topics

✔ Sharing of Learnings at Team Meetings

✔ Insisting staff explore and provide solutions to issues, rather than just reporting the problem

✔ Asking staff to share their learning after attending any course, training, or industry conference

✔ Rewarding and Recognising staff who offer ideas and solutions to problems

✔ Acknowledge and share problems and call on input from staff for solutions

✔ Treat feedback as a gift to be shared and acknowledge staff who provide feedback

✔ As a Leader be very clear that ignoring issues or not offering solutions is a conscious behaviour that is unacceptable

A Requirement for a Growth Mindset should be outlined to any potential new work candidates, whilst also forming part of the regular coaching conversations leaders have with their staff. It should also form part of the learning and development for Front-Line Leaders so they can locally deploy and apply a Growth Mindset with their team

FIXED V GROWTH MINDSET

FIXED MINDSET

Closed to learning and avoids exploring new things

- Avoid Failure
- Avoids new challenges
- Not prepared to challenge comfort zones
- Satisfied with status quo
- Stick to what is known
- Will not lead innovative thinking
- Not open or welcoming of constructive feedback
- Is defensive and deflective of criticism
- Tend not to evolve or grow as a person
- Unlikely to pursue personal critical reflection
- Risk averse and looks for reasons not to do something

The Easy Option is to say NO – and become the "Critic in the Stand"

GROWTH MINDSET

Open to learning and exploring new things

- Open to learning and continuous improvement
- Prepared to have a go, gives things a try
- Not scared to fail
- Treat failures and errors as learnings
- Can deal with uncertainty and ambiguity
- Embraces challenges
- Encourages and listens to feedback
- Responds to criticism
- Looking to personally grow & develop
- Sees challenges as opportunities
- Aware of risks and looks for ways to mitigate or prevent risks

The Hard Option is to commit and have a go to "Be the Player on the Field"

Everyone has the ability to have a Growth Mindset – But it needs to be affirmed and nurtured within a workplace – It needs to be encouraged and role modelled by Leaders. – Not stifled by the actions or attitude of local Leadership

2. LEARNING JOURNEYS NOT ALPHABET SOUP TRAINING

The biggest waste of time, effort and resources is conducting training courses for every skill or topic ever known. Often it just becomes "white noise" as most people never implement or apply content from a training course they attend. This is often called "alphabet soup training." However, carefully curated personalised learning journeys can have a profound impact on a person.

Typically, a learning journey should focus on the immediate next three years (anything further becomes intangible, but three years is near enough that a person can see its immediate effects and impact). These should be co-designed so has both a prescriptive and self-managed component. Key to any learning journey should be the Development of a 3 Year Summary Roadmap (one page) that outlines for an individual:

- ✔ Things they need to be able to Do
- ✔ Experiences they need to Undertake
- ✔ Qualifications they need to Attain
- ✔ Roles and Responsibilities they need to Assume
- ✔ Conferences and Events they need to Attend
- ✔ Skills they need to Master
- ✔ Projects they may need to take on or be involved with
- ✔ People they need to spend time with
- ✔ Future Expectations they will need to Meet
- ✔ Personal Qualities they will need to Build
- ✔ Activities they need to have Completed

This is much more than completing a skills gap analysis or highlighting strengths and weaknesses. This is all about ensuring a person has a fulfilled and rewarding life that aligns with their beliefs, personal and career aspirations. The greatest gift any employer can provide an employee is the tools and experiences to have fulfilled life.

Adult learning differs from children, in that most learning happens on the job, not in a classroom. Hence the 70-20-10 Model of Learning and Development Always Applies.

70% of all learning is on the job

20% of all learning is social, comes through a friend or colleague

10% of all learning is in a formal learning setting

A three year learning journey helps make the 70-20-10 model much more practical, adaptable and formalised. It removes the need for an employer to provide hours and hours of ineffective training, and puts the onus of development on both the employee and employer.

A Development Roadmap for an individual will help fuel and implement a Growth Mindset philosophy into the Organisation.

3. BUILD ACUMEN

Whether you call it business acumen, knowing the business, developing an enterprise mindset, being worldly, thinking like the business is yours, or just being commercially literate – there is no more fundamental requirement for success than having Front-Line Leaders and Managers who have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of how their organisation works. They need to know what makes the place tick:

- ✔ The Purpose of the organisation – why it is unique – how it aligns to the DNA of the business
- ✔ The Value Proposition – The upfront promises made to customers and staff
- ✔ The organisations place in the market – its point of difference – where it leads and lags
- ✔ How the organisation makes money
- ✔ How the place is run
- ✔ The Lead and Lag Measures that matter
- ✔ Financial Literacy – Being able to budget - Read a P&L or Balance Sheet
- ✔ How each section of the business creates Value

Recently the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) found that over 65% of Leaders surveyed agreed that insufficient business acumen was the primary factor in limiting their organisations ability to realise their strategic goals.

To Build Acumen, knowing the fundamentals of the organisation rests on four broad pillars

1. The Purpose – Vision – Mission – Values of the Business – Current Strategy

2. External Market Dynamics and Managing Customer Expectations

3. Internal Operational Alignment (How the Place is Run – Front End / Back End Familiarity)

4. Reading & Interpreting Current Performance and the Causes for It (Good or Poor)

Leaders need to understand how the organisation performance is trending, and use this to inform their day to day decision making with their teams – free of silos. Equipping the broader Leadership Team with an understanding of how the business works and how it will succeed will enable them to make better more informed decisions.

Focusing the Learning and Development around Building the Acumen of Leaders will provide a Return on Investment. This in turn builds understanding and commitment. This becomes the platform and context for how all Leaders Coach their Teams

Higher and Broader Levels of Business Acumen across the organisation will enable people to
-Predict and see issues before they get away
-Proactively Innovate and Problem solve without being asked to
-Coach and Influence Others to Improve Performance – Today!

PILLAR 4 RETENTION

(Progress & Belonging – Toxic Leaders – Personal Alignment)

Attracting and keeping good talented staff is a challenge at the best of times. There is no one fail safe formula to retaining staff. It requires vigilance by leaders to constantly check in with their people and look for any early warning signs. Research over the years highlights staff who have long tenure at organisations have the following eight attributes in place:

1. The have quality working relationships with their managers

2. They feel part of a unique team that is helping make a difference / adding value

3. The Leadership team is Trusted and Respected

4. The working is meaningful

5. They are able to make decisions and work autonomously (no over supervised)

6. Pay and conditions are considered fair and with industry benchmarks

7. They are encouraged to grow and learn

8. There is a sense of fun and healthy team chemistry in their organisation

What keeps people at a workplace is a deeply intimate equation, but three key ingredients do stand out. These are: A Sense of Progress and Belonging – The Relationship with Leaders – Personal Alignment.

1. A SENSE OF PROGRESS AND BELONGING

A feeling of progress is a powerful motivator. This can be both on an individual and team basis. Having a progressive winning feeling helps fuel two important emotions:

1. Confidence
2. Fulfilment

Progress feeds enthusiasm. Enthusiasm is infectious. A sense of progress and enthusiasm will always help build a positive team culture keen to achieve even more progress. In order for progress to be acknowledged there needs to be formal measures of progress (data – metrics) supported by a lived experience that progress is being felt and observed by others.

People who work in a team that is making progress are more likely to stay. If performance is falling away and continually deteriorating, one of two things happen:

-The team unites around the crisis and focus on how to improve and make progress.

Or

-They "jump for the lifeboats" and leave!

Progress does not need to be high achieving – no matter where the starting point is for any team, if progress is being achieved, then this will feed confidence and motivation in the team. But if today is the same as yesterday and the team never has a good day or week, then an attitude of indifference will become the prevailing feeling within the team.

> *If there is no progress, there can be no sense of achievement – if there is no sense of achievement there can be no meaningful recognition and celebration of success. Without this there can be no sense of belonging within a team*

A sense of belonging is crucial to the human psyche. Feeling a sense of belonging requires a person to be part of a team and a respected and valued team member. A Leaders role is to ensure ALL TEAM MEMBERS FEEL:

1. Safe (physically & mentally)

2. Included in the team dynamic

3. Supported and backed by their Leader

4. Their Leader is interested in who they are

5. Valued by the team and their contributions matter

6. Respected for who they are and what they bring to the team

7. Appreciated for the efforts they are making

A sense of belonging is a feeling. It results from lived experiences. A Leaders Behaviour, Actions, and Attitude are key to ensuring a sense of belonging is felt by all team members

2. TOXIC LEADERS

The Number 1 reason why staff leave is the relationship with their Direct Managers. This is a two-way process. Sometimes no matter how hard we try, sometimes we just do not get on or connect with people. We are human. Leaders who are self-aware, respectful and tolerant seem to be able to manage difficult relationships with people. This is part of the cut and thrust of hiring and managing a diversity of staff.

However, toxic leadership drives people away. Key is the direct report relationship – not just the Executive Leaders. Whilst the latter must be trusted and respected, and do preside over the health of the culture of the organisation, it is the local front-line leaders that directly touch staff every day. This is the critical relationship.

There are many forms of Toxic Leaders (see our article "Are you a Toxic Leader").

https://www.rypinternational.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Are-You-a-Toxic-leader.pdf

The key is what is tolerated, and for how long. A toxic leader kills staff morale, diminishes the enthusiasm and commitment of great staff, generate unnecessary stress and anxiety, and most of all drives people out of the organisation. It seems COVID has fuelled a rise of toxic leadership and it may be more prevalent than most think.

"The reasons for the persistence and spread of toxic leadership and their bad behaviours are many. The current market conditions and work issues are challenging all leaders. In a world, where email, texting, and social media replace face-to-face conversation and the compassion triggered by eye contact, too many poor managers do not feel the need for old-fashioned civility, and thus are becoming increasingly unaware of how inappropriate their behaviours and attitude are impacting on others" according to McKinsey & Company.

Of course, the other (and most prevalent) type of toxic leader is the absent leader. The one who does not lead, is not present either in the workplace or face to face, cannot and does not regularly check in, are defined by what they do not do, and what they stand for cannot be defined. These people are not Leaders – they are just merely in charge. Hence stand for nothing. Are not motivated. Do not engage. Do not take the time to coach and motivate their teams. These people never do anything right, nor do they do anything wrong. The one thing they do, is

demotivate people and drive staff away.

Tolerating a Toxic Leader is the surest way for any employer to increase staff turnover. The

biggest risk to tolerating a toxic leader is losing really good talent and potential future leaders.

3. PERSONAL ALIGNMENT

Everyone has a Front-Yard and Back-Yard. The Front-Yard is your career and work life. The Back-Yard is your personal life. They must be in alignment and in synch for anyone to feel fulfilled

and contented. Positive mental health and well-being requires an alignment between the two yards.

As we move through different life stages, our career and personal yards will have different demands. A young family requires quantity of time from parents. Similarly, children with ageing parents have a different demand placed on them. Starting a career or new job requires time, effort, and commitment to learn the ropes. The eight dimensions of wellness require all of us to self-manage these during different stages of life. These include:

- Family
- Personal Health
- Mental & Emotional Well-Being
- Spiritual / Beliefs
- Interests - Intellectual Stimulation
- Vocation - Career
- Social
- Financial

The ability to self-manage our life balance is a skill unique to everyone, that requires constant attention. Everyone needs to find their formula for life balance and contentment. When it is out of alignment, this will fuel thoughts of resignation, alternative roles, and anxiety around the status quo. Where and how a person wants to live and work has been tested in many of us in recent years. This is what has fuelled "The Great Resignation" in recent times.

Understanding how an employee is thinking and feeling about their life requires a leader to stop and ask! A leader needs to check in meaningfully with an employee, not just have a 5 minute stop gap corridor conversation.

There are warning signs for a leader to look out when staff are not personally aligned with the team

- They have flagged they are dissatisfied with the status quo.
- Their demeaner and body language is flat and disengaged
- They have recently had a life changing event – forcing them to evaluate what is important in life
- They have a distinct attitude of indifference to the workplace and their colleagues
- They exhibit roller coaster emotions and become upset at minor things
- They are prone to outbursts of anger
- Their interest in the team wanes
- They seem distracted, flat, uncaring and even aloof
- Their punctuality and propensity to volunteer for things falls away
- They are absent from work more often
- The quality of their work falls away
- There is a marked increase in their activity on social media
- They are slow and unresponsive to emails or return calls

Checking in meaningfully needs to be proactive, regular, and consistent. Do not wait for a staff member to tell you they are leaving. Usually it is too late to do anything to make them stay. Get on the front foot and have stay conversations, and take a holistic life approach – not just a workplace focus.

A Meaningful check in requires:

- A forward booked planned time at a private and suitable location
- The session to be face to face (ideally)
- An explanation well in advance on what the meeting is about and what it will cover
- The meeting agenda should be based around the following using open ended questions:

  - How they are and how they are feeling
  - How things are at home
  - Their current job issues and status (what is going well – could be improved)
  - Personal and Career Aspirations (Next 12 months – 3 years)
  - Their current needs and circumstances
  - Their observations and feedback of you as a Leader

- Depending on what transpires, replay back what you have heard – and seek their affirmations
- Agree three key actions that you can both commit to
- Lock in a follow up check in date

The above will help reveal to a Leader how personally aligned a staff member is with their career and personal lives. The more aligned, the more likely they will stay!

If a staff member announces they are leaving, and it is a surprise, then it probably means the leader has not meaningfully checked in with them

FINALLY

A magnetic workplace is the result of many things a leadership team do or do not do. When staff announce they are leaving – it is often too late to stop them. Staff retention is a key reflection of the quality of any organisation's leadership. The attraction and retention of talent is perhaps the number 1 leadership KPI!

Deflecting the reason for high staff turnover to standard excuses (such as competitors paying higher wages, or a staff member was burnt out, or the current turnover is within industry benchmarks) usually masks the real cause of why staff are leaving – This can usually be summed up as Well Intended Incompetence by the direct Leadership Team! Good teams do not lose talent. They nurture and retain talent.

Culture survey after culture survey will normally highlight the biggest cause of staff engagement and motivation is poor local leadership. The ability to engage, motivate, inspire and develop teams is the number one factor in attracting and retaining staff
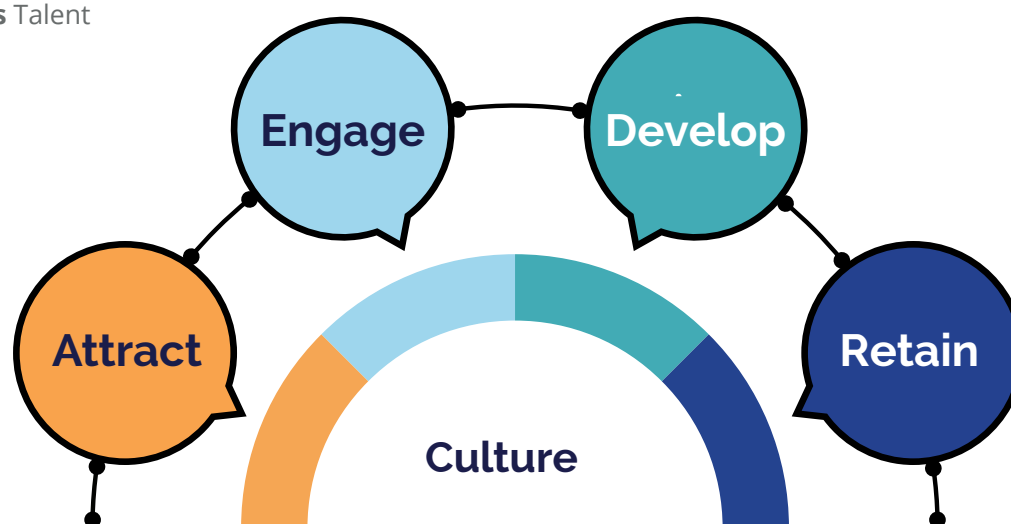
A Magnetic Workplace requires deliberate intent, which will entail a sustained and systematic approach. It cannot be left to HR. It cannot be a short-term burst of effort. It requires a collective leadership approach to nurture and shape a team culture that:

Attracts the Right Staff

Engages and Motivates the Team

Develops People

Retains Talent

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