HELIQS HR℠

OPERATING WITH INTENTION

MAKING AN IMPACT IN THE LIVES OF YOUR EMPLOYEES, CLIENTS, AND COMMUNITY

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"Integrity, passion, and stewardship: that is who we are. We took the time to figure that out…then we hired the best people with the best fit and provided them opportunities for growth, and that was our culture of intention," said former Apollo Award finalist, and Baker, Tilly, Virchow, and Krause LLP ("Baker Tilly") Executive Managing Partner, Ed Offterdinger.[1] Ed posits that because of a willingness to focus on their employees, Baker Tilly has seen increases in profits, exponential growth, decreased turnover, and an overall improvement in their culture over the years. "We want people to be proud; to say 'I'm a Baker Tilly person'."[1]

In Gallup's 2013 publication regarding applied behavioral economics, it was emphasized that a customer's interaction with employees drives the willingness of customers to continue to engage with that organization, and more importantly, how this engagement creates not just brand followers, but brand advocates. As brand advocates, customers passionately support a company with repeated sales, by returning more often, and staying a loyal customer for longer.[2]

22% of the U.S. workforce is *disengaged*.

Of the 22%, 48% are not motivated to bring their best to work and are NOT looking to leave.[3]

Unfortunately, not every member of the workforce is engaged; in fact, 22% of employees are disengaged, with 48% of those individuals feeling "emotionally disconnected from their work [with] little to no intrinsic motivation to bring their best."[3] What is worse, is that those employees are not looking to leave their organizations.[3] When a team of employees is engaged, they "want their organizations to succeed because they feel connected,"[2] and this shows in the way they offer better growth in areas like productivity and profitability and increased cost reduction in areas like turnover, absenteeism, and theft.[2]

The issue with disengaged employees begins with the "prisoners in the workplace."[3] If an employee is comfortable, not bringing their best, and not looking to leave, how can you foster a relationship that leads to "brand advocacy" between that disengaged employee and a customer thirsty for a unique, positive experience? The crucial piece of the puzzle is engaging those employees and adopting a unique approach, where one size does not fit all and the opportunity for "personal and professional growth [allows employees to] build a deeper emotional commitment to the organization."[2]

By asking disengaged employees what personally drives them to succeed and what they believe can become their greatest contribution to the team, we allow the employee to feel connected because the company cared enough to ask their

opinion. When we take the time to ask, we may find that some individuals desire to help others improve and share their expertise, making them prime candidates to be mentors. We may find that others desire more team collaboration. Either way, engaging employees does not require monetary commitment; it requires an employer commitment to the employees. When companies successfully employ these tactics, a 12% average delta can be found between the most engaged and least engaged business units![4] The nominees for Helios HR's Apollo Awards utilize programs that demonstrate ingenuity, commitment to their employees' personal and professional growth, and are intentional in helping to ingratiate employees to their organization, the impact of which cannot be ignored.

INDIVIDUALIZED EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

Vital to an organization's success and creating a culture of engagement is tailoring the approach to each individual employee's development. A 2015 Helios Apollo Awards nominee, Indigo IT, capitalized on the use of employee development as a tool not just for employees who require new or improved skills, but also for employees who demonstrate excellence in their field. This becomes especially relevant when many organizations are seeing training and development become more focused on the integration of these areas with the business strategy.[5] Through its Service Delivery Academy, Indigo IT offers the opportunity for all employees to select a "track" of interest and relevancy and take steps towards becoming a stronger performer in those areas, whether it be through formal training or new projects.

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>
> -Rob Craig, Indigo IT

What sets the Service Delivery Academy apart is the utilization of Deans for each school. "We have some very skilled resources that aren't being challenged to the level of their ability...[and we] realize the potential value they can provide to the company," said Executive Vice President and co-founder Rob Craig.[6] Designated as Deans, highly valued and impactful team members are provided the opportunity to engage and work with their colleagues in a unique manner. Each Dean reaches out at least once per month, via email, in person, or the "student's" preference to follow-up on the progress of all participants.

But that's not all the Service Delivery Academy does. Craig says, "By its very nature, [the Service Delivery Academy] engages us more with our employees...in that we've got employees out there who understand and buy into our vision of proactively investing in [our employees] and helping them realize their potential. In doing so, we leverage employees and their talents more fully, which translates to value for the company and our customers who now have more skilled and engaged individuals thinking through and performing the work."[6]

This style of training is not for every team member and Indigo IT works to make the value proposition clear by providing access to training dollars, mentorship opportunities, and career advancement. Instead of forcing hesitant individuals, who are comfortable where they are, down a path they may not be ready for, Indigo IT ensures that expectations for mastery and delivering excellence are clearly communicated. Indigo IT believes that by training and developing their team, they stay at the forefront of their field in a way other firms cannot. This is evidenced in the value they provide their customers in their ability to take on new challenges with ease through the mastery of new skills.

The impact of training and development can be significant, whether or not companies choose to invest in it. As one of Gallup's keys to building a high-performance culture[7], providing the opportunity for ongoing learning and development is of the utmost importance and drives engagement at all stages of the employee life-cycle.[8] A commitment to learning, development, and other career opportunities is identified as a "differentiating factor," meaning that the commitment displayed by an employer encourages employees to stay and strive towards the best possible outcomes. Among these outcomes are increased productivity, customer retention, and customer satisfaction.[8] This is proven by the fact that organizations that display an exceptional focus on learning and development correlates up to a 50% higher total shareholder return than a company that does not make such investments. [9]

> **Investing in and developing your team will lead to retaining your best people and creating the next generation of excellence.**

Not only are development and career opportunities viewed as highly desired differentiators, these factors are quickly becoming an expectation employees have of their employer, especially with the ever-growing presence of the millennial generation in the workplace.[10] One third of Aon Hewitt's 2015 survey respondents and nearly half of the millennials surveyed indicated they plan to look for a new job in the next year. [10] With those statistics in mind, the business case is easy to make: investing in and developing your team will lead to retaining your best people and creating the next generation of excellence.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF MENTORING

Not all employee development programs have to be formal learning management or training initiatives. Sometimes, as simple as it sounds, focusing on an employee's "strengths and positive characteristics" helped differentiate the best performers in Gallup's Q[12] survey when compared to those who "focused on weaknesses or negative characteristics" or "ignored" employees.[11] Apollo Awards finalist, SPARC, demonstrated their understanding of this concept with their unique approach to mentoring.

Donna Goldbranson, Executive Director of SPARC, has seen first-hand how SPARC's approach to mentoring can change someone's life. "Mentorship can change how your employees operate together, how teams work," Goldbranson said. "If you feel like you have a confidante, someone you feel comfortable with, whose opinions you can get without judgment, it lets you get your questions answered and get what you need in a way that can be difficult at a larger organization."[12]

What makes SPARC's approach to mentoring unique is the culture the organization's leaders have strived to build, which does not just encourage mentoring, it insists on it. "[Mentoring is] more than encouraged, it's a defined outcome in some of our projects...and through our partner organizations, we are able to put our employees in touch with more senior people in their field," Goldbranson states. And it's not just about being more senior on paper, but in your experiences in the field. "It's about the experiences. [New team members] will be book smart and fresh out of college, but then they come to us not knowing how things work in the real world. Here, they go from classroom to real world in an environment that is safe to learn and share your personal experiences because their mentor isn't there for performance management, but to provide a more personal, hands-on relationship."[12]

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> -Donna Goldbranson, SPARC

Most importantly, an individual growing professionally and consequently becoming a more productive and engaged member of the team is not the only return SPARC has seen through building a culture of mentorship. The return on their investment in their team, whether it is in new learning opportunities or being paired with a mentor, can be seen in the net they cast in the community. "Because we're small, people don't expect us to invest in them. In doing so, SPARC is not only helping our team grow, but it's helping us...make a bigger impact in the community."[12] How, you might ask? According to Goldbranson, SPARC's employees reap the rewards of the organization's willingness to invest in their future and growth, and stay advocates of the mission even after they leave.[12]

SPARC's commitment to mentoring tells a powerful story. Not all employees will be able to find what they are looking for with someone directly employed by your organization. Research paints a picture of varying engagement across gender, generation, and education. It shows us that women are slightly more engaged than men, that individuals with post-graduate or doctorate degrees are more likely to be disengaged than any other education level, and that "Traditionalists" and "Baby Boomers" display the highest level of engagement.[10] However as

employers, you can encourage them and provide the means to seek external mentoring opportunities and still reap great rewards. What matters is that the spirit of mentoring is encouraged and the benefits are embraced regardless of where in the community it comes from.

When an organization places value in mentorship, several benefits can be realized. Serving as a mentor provides insight into what is going on at lower levels and encourages two-way learning and knowledge transfer.[13] This becomes increasingly important as organizations begin planning for the knowledge gap that may be created by boomers getting closer to retirement and millennials admitting to considering leaving their job in the next 12 months should the labor market improve.[10] Not only do these relationships offer the opportunity to learn, but they hit three of the top drivers for engagement: relationship with co-workers, opportunities to use skills/abilities, and in many cases, a team member's relationship with his or her immediate supervisor.[14]

BECOMING A COMMUNITY PARTNER

Many corporate social responsibility programs have been created to help initiate a "pay it forward" mentality that urges people to provide the positive impact the community needs, and often times a company's culture starts to shift when it's leadership begins to create a culture of community partnership. During the Apollo Awards application process, applicants were asked to describe their community outreach practices. Apollo Award nominee, Equity Management, and Apollo Award winner, Billy Casper Golf, demonstrated their interest in helping a certain group within the community in which they serve. Each organization's leadership believes that, "If it does not come from the top, it does not have the same impact."[15] When leadership believes in a program and the momentum is felt throughout company, employees are willing to assist in providing the community outreach. People want to be able to contribute to the bigger picture, but some do not know where to begin.

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When asked how creating a community of giving impacts the organizations bottom line, both Equity Management and Billy Casper Golf have found that by creating a community of giving, their turnover rate is minimal and when employees leave, they often want to return. A sense of family is created by the leadership and the impact is seen throughout the entire organization. One former Billy Casper Golf employee commented, "I have Billy Casper Golf in my heart."[16] When organizations foster a culture for leadership development through community efforts, it often creates corporate citizenship that leads to a more productive and lucrative business.

Organizations have the ability to make a difference within their communities by utilizing internal manpower. In a poll conducted by The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, it was reported that between September 2013 and September 2014, over 62.8 million people volunteered at least once during the reported 12 month period.[17] On a yearly basis, over one-fourth of many organizations' employees volunteer more than a week's worth of time with 41% of volunteers becoming involved after being asked to do so.[17] In order to tap into this willingness to volunteer, and to begin to meet the needs of their employees, it is important that employee passions outside of the organization are taken into consideration when developing a community outreach initiative. Sapient Government Services practices two community outreach philosophies – "spend our money where our people spend their time and we care about what our people care about."[18] This tactic adds value to outreach programs and engages employees, thereby creating a more meaningful experience for the employee and the community.

Further evidence to support this theory can be seen in Equity Management's practices. They manage properties in several states and the District of Columbia and make a tremendous impact in their community. In 2014, one of the managed properties was unable to provide a playground for over 78 school-aged children. The playground was a necessity for the continued well-being of their community's children. John Potvin, President of Equity Management, took the need to heart and raised $15,000 in 45 minutes to assist in the playground completion.[19] The playground was built and employees gave of their time to complete the project by installing the finishing touches. Everyone involved walked away with a sense of pride and the children were thrilled to have a place to call their own. The residents were excited Equity cared enough to make a difference in their children's lives.[19]

> "Organizations who successfully engage their customers and employees experience a **240% boost in performance** related business outcomes."[11]

Equity Management is involved within the communities it serves and as a result maintains an occupancy rate of 97%.[19] Residents stay because of the care and concern they receive from Equity. This adds to the validity of the statement: "when organizations successfully engage their customers and their employees, they experience a 240% boost in performance-related business outcomes compared with an organization with neither engaged employees nor engaged customers."[11] When customers are treated well, they are loyal to the organization. It is thought that the more closely a company is tied to a social issue, there is a greater opportunity to leverage the business.[20] Potvin's concern for the community is not based on what community involvement can do for the business's bottom line. The community involvement is based on the humanity that pours from the organization. This humanity is felt

throughout the community and employees, inspiring customers and employees to remain loyal to Equity.[19]

Billy Casper Golf lives by the words of the late Billy Casper, "My goal in life is to help my fellow man and touch people's lives in a positive way wherever I go."[21] Joe Goodrich, Executive Vice President of Billy Casper Golf, and Rich Katz, Senior Vice President of Billy Casper Golf and Managing Director of Buffalo Brand Invigoration Group (Division of Billy Casper Golf), echo the sentiment Billy Casper embodied: people are placed on the Earth to serve their fellow man and building the community is what Billy Casper Golf is about.[16] Billy Casper Golf's most notable community outreach program raises money for the Wounded Warrior Project. Every year, since 2011, Billy Casper Golf has hosted the "World's Largest Golf Outing." This outing consists of approximately 150 golf courses across 30-35 states to host individual golf events on a specific day. Each course is given the autonomy to create a golf event that they believe will best support the cause. By allowing customization of the events, on a single day of golf in 2014, Billy Casper Golf raised over $885,000 for the Wounded Warrior Project.[16] Employees want to be a part of an organization that is more than the company. In the words of Rich Katz, "There is more to life than hitting a golf ball; you must put your business into perspective." [16]

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> -Rich Katz, Billy Casper Golf

Apollo Award nominees are companies of various population sizes, financial resources and manpower. Regardless of the individual resources, these nominees are doing amazing things within the community. By donating their time, stuffing backpacks for back-to-school projects, collecting coats or clothes, filling laundry baskets with necessities to help families relocate, or organizing food drives, these companies are making a positive impact within the communities they serve. Employees are beginning to expect to work for employers that focus on the needs of the community. The first step in developing a successful community outreach program is to find out what is important to employees to begin positively impacting the lives of people within the community.[24] The message is clear - leverage the organization's passion to make a positive impact on the community.

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Upon winning the Apollo Award in 2010, Dewberry's leadership emphasized the importance of a strong foundation. Nearly five years later, they are still living the culture that made them prominent among their fellow nominees. With every new program, Dewberry revisits what it means to be Dewberry at Work. Dewberry at Work speaks to five aspects – individualism, contribution, perseverance, honesty,

and passion.[15] Dewberry, not unlike other Apollo Award nominees and finalists, desires to make a difference within the lives of their employees, the organization and the community. Apollo Award nominees are forward thinking and have the desire to nurture their employee's professional growth and care for the people within their community.

When leaders work to build a culture of intention and focus on impacting the lives of employees and communities they serve, they will begin to develop programs that promote employee growth, and helps build strong relationships within the community. An organization's leadership determines the magnitude of the impact.

> One individual can shape the culture of an organization. One organization can impact its community. **And one community can inspire the world.**

"Start simple and continuously improve."[6] One individual can make a difference. One individual can shape the culture of an organization. One organization can impact its community. And one community can inspire the world.

Organizations, large and small, continue to invest in their employees. In the 2014 State of the Industry Report conducted by The Association for Talent Development (ATD), it was found that companies are investing more money and that learning hours available to employees have increased for employee training and development programs over the previous year.[25] As companies continue to invest in the future of their employees, employees are empowered to invest in the company. This creates a culture of operating with intention. Empower your employees to make a difference within your business and throughout the community.

If your organization is ready to start building a culture of intention, you are encouraged to utilize the checklist provided to begin to define your approach to being an exceptional corporate citizen and community impact partner. While focusing on your presence in the community, these steps will aide in discovering what matters to the team members who make your organization exceptional.

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If your company is interested in building a culture of corporate citizenship or creating a larger corporate citizenship footprint within the community, here is a checklist for your reference.

Building a Culture of Corporate Citizenship

1. Find out what matters
   - ✓ To Your Organization
     - o Determine the key decision makers and strategy influencers.
     - o Determine how the organization's mission statement can impact action within the community.
     - o Seek specific causes that are in alignment with the organization's strategic goals.

   - ✓ To Your Team
     - o Conduct an employee opinion survey or create focus groups to find out what matters most to your organization.
     - o Ensure that you include causes where your team members may already be contributing time or other resources.
     - o Determine if there are volunteer opportunities that will help employees build and utilize their specific skillset.

2. Be SMART
   - ✓ Set goals for your program that are SMART: Specific, Measurable, Accountable, Realistic, and Timely.

3. Stay Focused
   - ✓ Maintain your initial goals and hopes; allow those goals and hopes to determine your actions.
   - ✓ Don't be afraid to own it. There is value in knowing what you support and showing that support, even if it means being out there on your own.
   - ✓ Avoid allowing the outreach to become a plethora of unattainable initiatives.
   - ✓ Assemble a team to focus on obtaining goals.

4. It is a Process
   - ✓ Give your organization and people permission to start small.
   - ✓ Celebrate successes in outreach; this will enable your team to build the confidence to become leaders in corporate citizenship.

When you are looking for a new way to further develop and engage your team or establish a way to help close the knowledge gap, a mentoring program can provide those opportunities at low to no cost to your organization. Use the below guidelines to develop your program.

Creating a Mentoring Program
1. Create a program roadmap
   - ✓ Be comprehensive. Your roadmap should include a definition of success, goals, implementation timelines, and what qualifications ideal mentors have.
2. Get buy-in from senior management
   - ✓ Be prepared to show the potential return on investment, including but not limited to: increased engagement, helping to close the knowledge gap, or implementing a low cost development program.
3. Identify a project team.
   - ✓ Decide on their involvement. Will they help match mentors and mentees? Help the first participants draft action plans, topics, and evaluations?
   - ✓ Make clear to your team what the goals are and expectations for their involvement including anticipated time investments.
4. Develop Matching Procedures
   - ✓ Some organizations find success in allowing mentors and mentees match themselves, whereas other organizations conduct the matching for the participants.
   - ✓ Determine what process suits your program and develop the guidelines you will use to bring team members together.
5. Perform a pilot
   - ✓ Have an initial group participate in mentoring with a defined timeframe; conduct regular check-ins and feedback sessions. Remember: continuous improvement is key to success!
6. Conduct a Recognition Ceremony
   - ✓ It is an exciting thing to successfully facilitate a mentor/mentee relationship. Recognize your team for their successes and revisit your processes and definitions for the next round of mentoring.

Additional Resources for Developing Your Mentoring Toolkit
Helios HR: "How to Start a Mentoring Program at Work"

Helios HR: "How to Establish the Best Career Mentor Relationship for Professional Development"

NOVA/Dulles SHRM: "Mentoring Program Toolkit"

The Office of Personnel Management: "Guidelines for Establishing and Implementing a Mentoring Program"

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