



We Are...

PENN STATE

What you can do to increase employee engagement

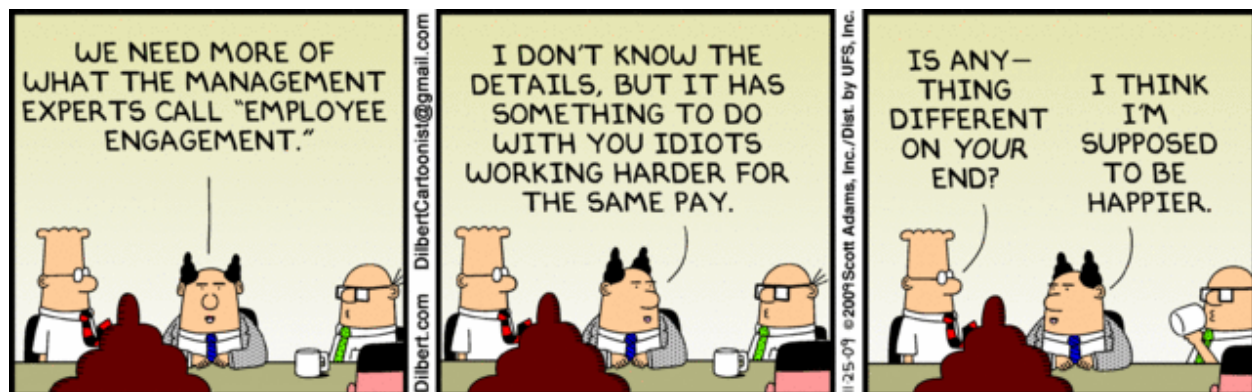


Paige Fyock - Penn State's Computer Store

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As Penn State looks to “do more with less” (a lot more, in terms of vital aspects of its teaching, research and outreach mission, and perhaps a lot less in terms of state funding), the daily productivity, creativity, and commitment of its employees becomes an even more important factor of institutional success. Doing more with less is the context of the burgeoning interest in “employee engagement” in the HR literature. In this project we examine some key points about employee engagement, and we look at our respective work units to assess what’s being done and what more could be done in support of an engaged workforce at Penn State.

While there is some disagreement about the definition and measurement of employee engagement ([Crush 2009](#)), it can be defined as “*the degree to which an individual is attentive and absorbed in the performance of their roles.*” (Saks 2006) (There is at least one unrelated definition of “employee engagement” that looks at employee involvement in community service [[IYF 2007](#)], not the topic of this project.) Truly engaged employees are attracted to, and inspired by, their work (“I want to do this”). They are committed, (“I am dedicated to the success of what I am doing”) and are fascinated (“I love what I am doing”). An engaged employee feels energized and committed to the organization. They perform better, do more, and display more job ownership.

While engagement can be closely related to “job satisfaction”—liking one’s job—these are two separate concepts. (Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes 2002) For instance, US Defense Secretary Robert Gates [told an interviewer in May of 2009](#), “I don’t like my job,” because of the responsibilities involved, but he presumably has a high level of engagement. And it’s possible to like a job precisely because it requires little engagement, although such a job should always be a candidate for downsizing.

Effective supervision and leadership are essential to maximizing employee engagement. For the bulk of employees on the engagement scale, who are somewhat but not optimally engaged according to the definition above, the management issue is how to achieve improvements in engagement (and, therefore, overall outcomes) without requiring unrealistic, unsustainable, and “unhealthy” engagement of the sort that leads to burnout ([Boyle 2009](#), and the [Dilbert comic above](#)). For those employees who

are “actively disengaged,” in a way that renders their own work substandard and negatively impacts the engagement and work of others, the management issue is how to get their engagement levels up to at least acceptable levels, how to separate engagement from overall competence issues, and how to appropriately characterize and document lack of engagement for possible disciplinary purposes.

Research on employee engagement confirms that leadership makes a huge difference, that the direct relationship with one’s manager is the strongest of all drivers. Employees look to the leadership for example. If employees’ relationship with their managers is fractured, then no amount of perks will persuade the employees to perform at top levels. Employees who claim the highest levels of overall job satisfaction are often working in organizations in which they have significant autonomy. Employee choice influences engagement - personal choice has a big influence on how readily we tackle challenges.

The challenges that we choose, we own. The challenges imposed upon us (even with the best intentions), we merely submit to. The engagement literature for the for-profit sector has identified a recurring group of factors/strategies for increasing and sustaining employee engagement, which [Seijts and Crim \(2006\)](#) have called “the Ten C’s”:

1. **Connect:** “Leaders must show that they value employees.”
2. **Career:** “Leaders should provide challenging and meaningful work with opportunities for career advancement.”
3. **Clarity:** “Leaders must communicate a clear vision.”
4. **Convey:** “Leaders clarify their expectations about employees and provide feedback on their functioning in the organization.”
5. **Congratulate:** “Exceptional leaders give recognition, and they do so a lot.”
6. **Contribute:** “People want to know that their input matters and that they are contributing to the organization’s success in a meaningful way.”
7. **Control:** “Employees value control over the flow and pace of their jobs and leaders can create opportunities for employees to exercise this control.”
8. **Collaborate:** “Great leaders are team builders; they create an environment that fosters trust and collaboration.”
9. **Credibility:** “Leaders should strive to maintain a company’s reputation and demonstrate high ethical standards.”
10. **Confidence:** “Good leaders help create confidence in a company by being exemplars of high ethical and performance standards.”

This list, like almost all of the literature on employee engagement, is based on the for-profit sector. However, nonprofits like higher education are in a unique situation. (Hagedorn and Forlaw 2007; Birdi, Patterson and Wood 2007) While all of us in higher education have a mandate to stay within our budgets, relatively few of us are assigned the goal of maximizing revenue or net profit—and even those units work within the constraints of the institution’s teaching, research, and outreach mission. If a for-profit firm could be more profitable switching from Product A to Product B they would presumably do it, but if Intercollegiate Athletics could make more money leasing Beaver Stadium to WWE than using it for Penn State Football, they presumably wouldn’t do it because their mission is to promote a certain

activity. The University, in short, is *mission-driven* with a balanced budget as an *operational* necessity, while the for-profit firm is *profit-driven* with mission as a *motivational* necessity.

Some of the factors/strategies noted above are not significantly different between the for-profit and higher education sectors, such as **Connect** and **Congratulate**, which even correspond to Mastering Supervision modules (“Building a Work Team” and “Feedback, Reward, and Recognition”). But given the nature of the higher education enterprise, other strategies such as **Clarity** and **Contribute** are more complicated. In the for-profit world, the maximization of profit is such a clear and constant motivator that all employees ought to understand how their job is relevant to the bottom line, and how the bottom line is relevant to their compensation and even to their continued employment. Even work units that don’t directly produce revenue, such as a maintenance office, are implicated on the cost/savings side of the ledger.

This special nature of higher education (and non-profits generally) introduces a new element of “mission engagement” to the categories noted by Saks (2006): “job engagement” based upon the intrinsic interest that the job holds for the employee, and “organization engagement” based on the perceived contribution to the organization. Some jobs are intrinsically interesting enough, at least for the right person, that job engagement can be the leading type of engagement. (This is sometimes the case for IT professionals—see [Bradley 2006](#).) For most people, however, organizational engagement is very important in getting employees to perform at their best: the idea (and reality) that everyone else in the office is counting on you. Mission engagement is based on the same dynamic, except that the people counting on you are external: students, communities, and in short everyone outside Penn State who is impacted by the University’s activities. This requires an understanding by employees of the University’s [Mission](#) and a [Strategic Plan](#), as well as the missions/plans of their own units, and an understanding of the significance of their work towards the fulfillment of the mission and the plan.

“Engagement” at Penn State: What’s In a Word

At Penn State we frequently hear the word “engagement” with regard to students—that the University needs to create the conditions for student engagement, as measured by the [National Survey of Student Engagement \(NSSE\)](#) and other instruments used by Student Affairs and the Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence (SITE), to cite two examples. Engagement with “institutions and communities” is also part of the University’s mission, as noted in the current [Strategic Plan](#); we even have an [Associate Vice President for Public Engagement](#). And the Smeal College of Business [has recognized](#) “employee engagement” as a significant issue for U.S. business. But the term has very little presence in the University’s staff and faculty dealings, as a [search of the OHR webspace](#) shows. So our challenge is to heighten awareness and understanding of employee engagement as a factor increased productivity and improved results.

Penn State's Computer Store: Engagement through recognition and job satisfaction

[Penn State's Computer Store](#) is a non-profit, non-commissioned service that provides hardware and software to the Penn State community at academic pricing. We foster growth while maintaining quality through unity, professional development and efficient collaboration and provide customers with excellent service by meeting or exceeding their needs and expectations concerning technology. Our fundamental objective is to develop lasting relationships with customers, based on mutual satisfaction and trust. Loyal customers are the source of our growth, and good work and services are our contribution to them.

Our people are naturally productive and they build on each others' actions. Rewards are via praise by both supervisors and peers, time off the showroom floor, a special assignment, a committee role, or personal development opportunity such as training or travel. We have the advantage of using the newest gadgets/technology and use the newest software to make sure our customers have the knowledge they need. We have minimal rules and guidelines. A fair and consistent work environment is ensured. Work is more than just a paycheck. It provides social needs. Monthly game nights and evenings on the town are common events. Holiday gatherings and birthdays are celebrated at the office as well as in each other homes.

Encouragement to volunteer with your favorite charity is endorsed by our Director, Senior Director, and Vice Provost of Information Technology Services who give countless hours of themselves to such worthy causes as Trash To Treasure, United Way Day of Caring, and coaching of many youth teams and organizations. These special people also ask for employee input before new policies are implemented and hold regular meetings to spend time with everyone. If you so choose, you may have them treat you to breakfast for your PSU anniversary date. Not only do they know your name, but they know your family members and they speak to you in public. We really are "one big happy family."

The Environment and Natural Resources Institute: Multiple paths to engagement

[The Environment and Natural Resources Institute \(ENRI\)](#) in the College of Agricultural Sciences was created in January, 2005 to champion, facilitate, and catalyze collaborative multidisciplinary research to solve complex environmental problems, protect and enhance ecosystem services, and increase human-well being.

- ENRI builds teams of researchers and educators from the College of Agricultural Sciences and across Penn State in pursuit of its mission.
- ENRI actively engages people in government, industry, nonprofit organizations, and communities to bring the best that Penn State has to offer in environmental science and education to solving high priority problems
- ENRI develops and supports educational programs to train the next generation of environmental leaders and problem solvers

ENRI is made up of relatively few employees but the work done in the institute reaches across departments and colleges and, through outreach, to communities and government.

The Conference Board published a report in 2006 “Employee Engagement, A Review of Current Research and Its Implications” which reviews research conducted by 12 major research companies on employee engagement. In each of these studies, “employee engagement” was defined as: “a heightened emotional connection that an employee feels for his or her organization, that influences him or her to exert greater discretionary effort to his or her work.” Much of the research conducted for this project shows that those in a leadership role can influence the level of employee engagement by creating or failing to create an environment where employees feel connected to their work and believe that what they do has an impact on the people and the world around them. There are many factors that contribute to the positive working environment at ENRI. Based on the report published by The Conference Board, several studies show that there are “eight key drivers” of employee engagement all of which can be experienced at ENRI.

Trust and Integrity – *how well managers communicate and ‘walk the talk’*

Communication is the key to building good working relationships with employees in any workplace. The way in which a supervisor communicates as well as the amount of information he or she provides is the basis for a positive working environment and determines the level of comfort an employee feels with their boss. If the employee is not intimidated, he or she is more likely to contribute much more to the job.

Nature of the job –*Is it mentally stimulating day-to-day?*

The nature of the job at ENRI is very stimulating because much of the research and work being done is related to current issues often heard on the radio or seen in the news. Employees at ENRI are encouraged to become involved in some cases on site which can be very fascinating.

Line of sight between employee performance and company performance – *Does the employee understand how their work contributes to the company's performance?*

Employees are more engaged when they understand the mission of an organization and how their work contributes to its success.

The next two drivers are likely to be interrelated: **Career Growth opportunities** – *Are there future opportunities for growth?* And **Employee development** – *Is the company making an effort to develop the employee's skills?*

The leadership at ENRI believes strongly in professional development and the betterment of its employees. Employees are encouraged to learn new skills which enable them to grow in their position and possibly take on new responsibilities. Case in point is my taking the Mastering SuperVision course which has provided me with the tools to be an effective supervisor. Employees in general seek training to improve job performance.

Pride about the company – *How much self-esteem does the employee feel by being associated with their company?*

Those who have a thorough understanding of the mission of their organization can truly take pride in their unit and in their work. This is built by leaders who set the standard and enthusiastically lead by example as is the case with the leadership at ENRI and in the College of Agricultural Sciences. The enthusiasm of the leadership is contagious. Penn State has a reputation for being a top research university and knowing that your work contributes to that success is indeed something of which to be proud.

Coworkers/team members – *significantly influence one's level of engagement*

The current configuration at ENRI is designed so that the team relies on each other to accomplish the goals of the many initiatives of the institute. Most members of the team are more than willing to assist others or work to find other ways to accomplish the work. Innovation and creativity are highly valued and encouraged.

Relationship with one's manager – *Does the employee value his or her relationship with his or her manager?*

The Conference Board report also finds that **"the direct relationship with one's manager is the strongest of all drivers."** Thus, a manager who creates an environment that is free from anxiety, where each employee's ideas and input are solicited and valued and even implemented, and where decisions are made in consultation with all who will be affected creates the perfect environment for an employee to be actively engaged in their work. As a result, this environment fosters retention of good employees; accomplishes the goals of the unit; and enhances the effectiveness of the College and the University as an institution that is "Making Life Better."

The College of Agricultural Sciences understands the value of engaged employees as it offers a new staff orientation and has a number of college-wide awards recognizing exemplary employees.

Bill Devlin, Director of Human Resources in the College of Agricultural Sciences states that because of the size of the college and because of its diverse nature it is very important for new employees and new faculty to attend an orientation program. The staff orientation consists of an overview of the college, cooperative extension, and the college relations office, a panel discussion Q&A session with academic unit leaders, and a presentation and panel discussion by the Human Resources department. Other highlights include a talk with the Dean and an activity such as the “FISH! Philosophy” program or a tour of campus facilities (e.g. the mushroom facility, farm operations, or the creamery). The orientation concludes with an evaluation. Feedback from the participants is used in the planning of future orientation events. It is evidence that the college attempts to contribute to the success and engagement of its employees by providing them a better understanding of the college, its mission and goals, and how they fit into these objectives and how their contributions will help reach the goals of the college.

The College of Agricultural Sciences also has a number of reward programs for faculty and staff. For example, the Ella Reagle Staff Assistant Award has been established to honor and recognize staff assistants who support the college and is awarded annually to a staff assistant who has demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to the college and his or her work unit. Nominees exhibit leadership and professionalism; demonstrate specialized knowledge in their positions; mentor, motivate and support others; possess a high level of integrity; take initiative and carry out tasks effectively and efficiently; and demonstrate respect for the value of all individuals.

(For more examples of CAS faculty/staff awards, see Appendix 2.)

Schreyer Honors College: Opportunities for increased mission engagement

The [Schreyer Honors College](#) is Penn State's university-wide undergraduate honors program. Founded in 1997, it is the direct successor of the University Scholars Program founded in 1980. The SHC's mission and vision are as follows:

The mission of the Schreyer Honors College is to promote:

- Achieving academic excellence with integrity
- Building a global perspective, and
- Creating opportunities for leadership and civic engagement.

Schreyer Honors College Vision

- To educate men and women who will have an important and ethical influence in the world, affecting academic, professional, civic, social, and business outcomes.
- To improve educational practice and to be recognized as a leading force in honors education nationwide.

While the mission is constantly emphasized in the College's outreach to prospective and current students, and to external constituencies like donors, in its day-to-day work the SHC staff is necessarily concerned with meeting deadlines, providing support to each other in a highly integrated office, and "customer service" in the most general sense. SHC staff members have a high level of engagement based not so much on the inherent interest the tasks themselves (which are largely administrative), but rather on everyone's understanding of their importance within the overall organization; in other words, *organization* rather than *job* engagement according to Saks's distinction noted above. SHC staff members have a sense of their importance *in* the organization, more than a sense of the importance *of* the organization, so there are opportunities to cultivate mission engagement in ways that improve outcomes.

This starts with the initial hiring process, a key moment of socialization into any workplace (Scholarios, Lockyear, and Johnson 2003). Not surprisingly, the most recent announcement for the dean's position (2005) put the first bullet point of the SHC's vision (see above) in the second sentence, and called for "an ability to inspire students and faculty to expand their knowledge and understanding in a global perspective." But for other postings ranging from staff assistants to directors there is no invocation of the SHC mission or vision, or even a functional explanation of what the SHC does within the University; instead there is a more or less lengthy list of required or desired task-specific abilities and experiences. While the interview process generally gets into aspects of our mission, the generic announcement makes it harder to attract candidates who might have some privileged insight into the mission, and harder to identify them through their applications.

Once an employee is hired, the usual socialization is to introduce them to everyone else in the office, getting them acquainted with staff roles and how their job is related to everyone else's: a necessary part of building organization engagement as defined above, and it clearly works based upon the results we

see in the SHC. A mission engagement approach, while retaining all of those staff contacts, could include meeting students and perhaps faculty, getting acquainted with their goals and how the SHC enriches their experiences.

Looking now at ongoing socialization of SHC staff as a whole, monthly staff meetings are an important fixture and they too are solidly in the organization engagement mold. They are organized by office unit (academic update, IT update, admissions update, etc.) and they emphasize what's new in policies, procedures, events, and workflow—in short, everything coming from a given unit that could impact the work of other units. Since this usually takes the better part (or all) of the 90 minutes we can allot to a staff meeting without closing the office for too long, it would be a challenge to introduce new elements. However, it could be worthwhile from a mission engagement perspective to devote time at each meeting, or perhaps a new sort of regular meeting, to current issues of concern to the people we serve (starting with students, and to a lesser extent faculty), and stepping back a bit more, to hearing from students about their research or creative activity (the thesis that defines their SHC experience), their employment or graduate/professional school aspirations and results, and any number of other topics that could remind us (as a staff) why the SHC exists and why it's important for us to operate at maximum productivity and effectiveness.

One further example of a possible shift from organization to mission engagement cultivation would be staff reward and recognition. Over the years the SHC has had an on-again, off-again monthly staff award (right now we are in an “on” phase, which may be permanent), where nominations are taken confidentially and the decision is made by the previous month's recipient. While there are no written specifications, the common assumption is that the award should be for exceptional service to others in the office—in other words, to helping the SHC as an organization. It might be worthwhile to redefine the award (not through any written directive, but via staff discussion) as recognition of exceptional service to students—conceivably, students could be the nominators, as they are for SHC teaching and advising awards. This would re-center our thinking about the purpose of our tasks and processes, and would give students some symbolic ownership of how we define excellence.

The “great divide” in the SHC, and in most academic units, is that staff engage in largely administrative activities that are divorced from the specifics of what the academic unit **does** (for example, there's nothing historical or chemical or intellectually enriching about what the Chemistry Department or History Department or Schreyer Honors College do with online forms and grant applications), but these are activities that exist (assuming they're worthwhile activities) in support of the unit's mission, in terms of the creation of knowledge and student success. The behavioral assumption in this brief case study is that if staff were more aware of the relevance of their daily tasks and projects to the unit's core reason for existence (and, indirectly, to the University's reason for existence), they would be more engaged in those daily tasks and perform them better—and the staff would, over time, be composed of the people most suited to that particular situation. This doesn't mean that staff assistants should be expected to love the subject matter of their academic unit, or to have any kind of education/training beyond what is necessary for their respective positions, but if the substance of what the unit does (as opposed to

merely the processes) were less of a “black box” to them, they could be more engaged because the consequences of improved task fulfillment for the unit’s mission would be clearer.

Conclusions

Fully engaged employees have a positive impact on workplace performance. Everyone wants a dynamic and spirited workforce. An engaging workplace and an engaged workforce can be powerful recruiting and retention tools. The more engaged the workforce is, the more productive the organization will be. Universities have the advantage of a mission that they have been committed to over a long period of time: they are focused on teaching, learning, research and service. This mission, if properly applied to the workplace, can create greater satisfaction and greater engagement. However, fulfilling the University’s mission is not possible without effective leadership. It is essential that managers and supervisors foster employee engagement by creating a stimulating work environment. As described in this report, this is achieved through effective communication, building trust with employees and valuing employee input, and leading by example.

While this project does not deal with faculty engagement, perhaps the flagship employee-engagement activity at Penn State is for new faculty: the [Road Scholars](#) program introduced by President Spanier and now in its 14th year. New and recently-tenured faculty accompany Dr. Spanier on a three-day tour that includes not only Penn State campuses, but other sites and experiences that give this overwhelmingly non-Pennsylvanian group some greater understanding of the University and of the state that we serve. For instance, the 2007 tour included (apart from several campuses) the Gettysburg battlefield, the Harley-Davidson factory in York, and an Amish farm. This promotional quote from a past participant is a perfect example of what any engagement-building activity should accomplish at Penn State:

The tour did three very important things for me. First, it gave me a better understanding of the impact that Outreach and Penn State have on the state. Second, it helped me understand Penn State and the importance of the branch campuses. Third, meeting so many interesting people, fellow faculty and staff, actually made me even more excited about being at Penn State.

While it is not realistic to send Penn State staff (or even more than a self-selecting handful of faculty) around Pennsylvania, there are plenty of opportunities to familiarize staff with how their work impacts other parts of the University, students, and the wider world, along the lines of the College of Agricultural Sciences faculty/staff orientation model described in the ENRI section of our project.

APPENDIX 1: A-to-Z of Motivation and Engagement Quotations

* Atmosphere: "Devising and maintaining an atmosphere in which others can put a dent in the universe is the leader's creative act." --Warren Bennis

* Beginnings: "The beginning is the most important part of the work." --Plato

* Communication: "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." --George Bernard Shaw

* Delegate: "Delegating works, provided the one delegating works, too." --Robert Half

* Empower: "The vision is really about empowering workers, giving them all the information about what's going on so they can do a lot more than they've done in the past." --Bill Gates

* Flexibility: "The bend in the road is not the end of the road, unless you refuse to take the turn." --Unknown

* Growth: "There are no such things as limits to growth, because there are no limits to the human capacity for intelligence, imagination, and wonder." --Ronald Reagan

* Humility: "It is amazing what you can accomplish when you do not care who gets the credit." --Harry S. Truman

* Ingenuity: "Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity." --George S. Patton

* Jest: "Jesters do oft prove prophets." --William Shakespeare

* Keys: "All one has to do is hit the right keys at the right time and the instrument plays itself." --Johann Sebastian Bach

* Learn: "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." -- Dr. Seuss

* Moments: "Learn from the past, set vivid, detailed goals for the future, and live in the only moment of time over which you have any control: now." --Denis Waitley

* Now: "Forever is composed of nows." --Emily Dickinson

* Objectives: "First, have a definite, clear practical ideal; a goal, an objective. Second, have the necessary means to achieve your ends; wisdom, money, materials, and methods. Third, adjust all your means to that end." --Aristotle

* Profits: "When we cast our bread upon the waters, we can presume that someone downstream whose face we will never know will benefit from our action, as we who are downstream from another will profit from that grantor's gift." --Maya Angelou

* Question: "Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning." --Albert Einstein

* Results: "When I have fully decided that a result is worth getting, I go ahead of it and make trial after trial until it comes." --Thomas Edison

* Success: "Success is simple. Do what's right, the right way, at the right time." - Arnold H. Glasow

* Try: "Do, or do not. There is no try." --Yoda, The Empire Strikes Back

* Uncertainty: "True genius resides in the capacity for evaluation of uncertain, hazardous, and conflicting information." --Winston Churchill

* Vision: "A leader has the vision and conviction that a dream can be achieved. He inspires the power and energy to get it done." --Ralph Nader

* Why: "He who has a why to live can bear almost any how." -- Friedrich Nietzsche

* Xerox: "Once the Xerox copier was invented, diplomacy died." --Andrew Young

* Yearnings: "We become not a melting pot but a beautiful mosaic. Different people, different beliefs, different yearnings, different hopes, different dreams." --Jimmy Carter

* Zest: "True happiness comes from the joy of deeds well done, the zest of creating things new." --
Antoine de Saint-Exupery

Found at:

<http://www.ravensbrain.com/2008/09/to-z-quotes-for-employee-engagement.html>

<http://www.zimbio.com/member/WholeEnchi/articles/1339445/Z+quotes+Employee+Engagement>

<http://employeeengagement.ning.com/profiles/blogs/1986438:BlogPost:8272>

Appendix 2: College of Agricultural Sciences Faculty and Staff Achievement Awards

The Barash Award for Human Service

The Barash Award for Human Service was created in 1975 by the family of the late Sy Barash. It is an annual award to a full-time member of the faculty, staff, or student body of The Pennsylvania State University at University Park who has contributed most, apart from regular duties, to human causes, public service activities and organization, or the welfare of fellow humans. These human service activities must have been performed in University Park, the Borough of State College, College, Patton, Harris, or Ferguson Townships.

Any full-time person at the University Park Campus who meets the criteria for the award as previously described is eligible for consideration. The award carries a stipend of \$1,000.

The McKay Donkin Award

The McKay Donkin Award was established in 1969 in honor of the late McKay Donkin who served as Vice President for Finance and Treasurer of the University from 1957 to 1968. The award, which consists of a \$500 stipend and a certificate, is presented to the full-time member of the faculty or staff or the retiree who has contributed most to the "economic, physical, mental, or social welfare of the faculty" of the University.

The Award for Administrative Excellence

The Administrative Excellence Award, which carries a stipend of \$1,000, is made annually to a member of the staff of The Pennsylvania State University whose performance methods and achievements exemplify administrative excellence. The Award is funded by a gift from Kenneth E. and Mary K. Warrick. Criteria considered in the evaluation of nominees include:

- total experience in administrative position(s)
- accumulative levels of responsibility and authority
- years of service at the University, and in present position
- impact on own organization, and on University in general
- content of material submitted by nominators

A brief resume or vita, including items relevant to the award criteria, would be particularly helpful, as well as an organizational chart and job description to depict where the nominee fits administratively.

The Staff Excellence Award

This award recognizes the consistently outstanding performance of a staff member who has demonstrated and practiced the philosophy of continuous quality improvement, team spirit, managerial excellence in the performance of assigned duties, and provided leadership in establishing a quality service orientation, so as to benefit his or her unit and the University.

The award, consisting of a \$500 stipend and certificate, will be given in recognition of meeting one or more of the following criteria:

- demonstrated sensitivity to others
- leadership commitment to teamwork and efficiency of operation
- demonstrated ability to skillfully manage his/her unit
- commitment to continuous quality improvement
- demonstrated service orientation to unit customers

To be eligible for the award, full-time University staff must have at least five years of active service.

The Staff Support Award

The Support Staff Award, established in 1997, recognizes the overall high quality performance of a non-exempt member of the staff in fulfilling the mission of the University and of his/her unit.

The award, consisting of a \$1000 stipend and certificate, will be given in recognition of meeting the following criteria:

- dedicated focus to customer service
- commitment to quality improvement
- outstanding abilities
- team work
- professionalism

To be eligible for the award, full-time non-exempt staff must have at least five years of active University service.

The Dr. James Robinson Equal Opportunity Award

The Dr. James Robinson Equal Opportunity Award was created in February 1988 by the University. The award, sponsored by the Penn State Alumni Association, and given in honor of Dr. James Robinson, 1949, a devoted alumnus and former Alumni Council member, is designed to recognize a University faculty or staff member who promotes the concept of equal opportunity through affirmative action and/or contributes to enhancing the educational environment of the University through improving cross-cultural understanding.

The award, consisting of a \$1500 stipend and certificate, will be given in meeting one or more of the following criteria:

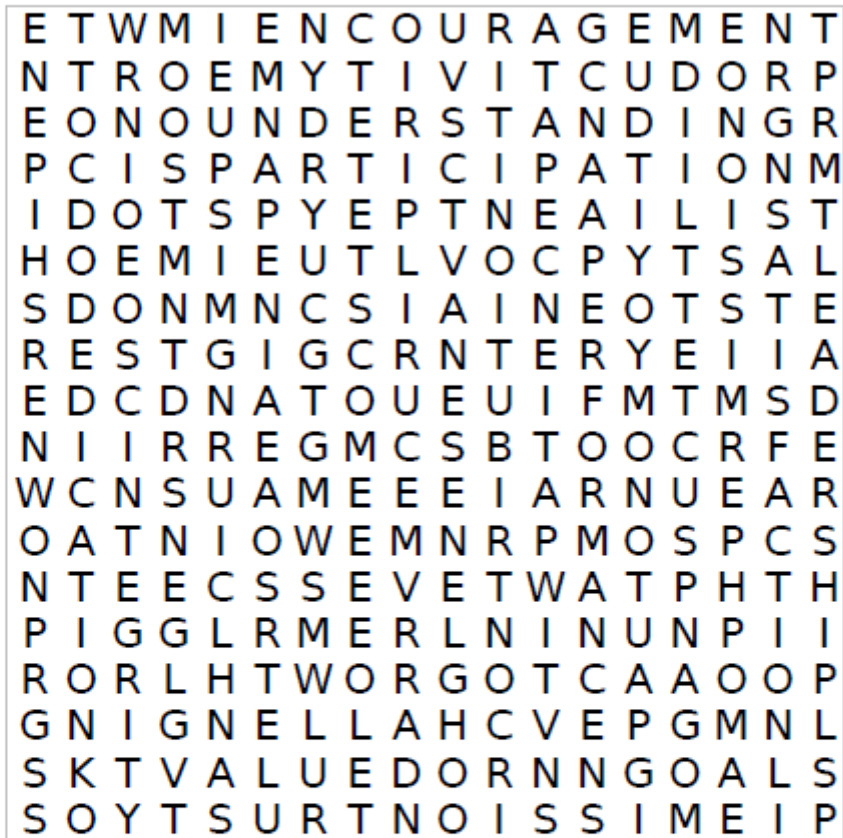
- demonstrated commitment in the spirit of equal opportunity through affirmative action
- demonstrated leadership in the elimination of discrimination through encouragement or understanding between person of different races, sexes, age groups, ethnicity, or religious heritage
- demonstrated commitment to meeting the special needs of students, faculty, or staff who are members of traditionally underrepresented groups

To be eligible for the award, full-time University faculty and staff must have at least two or more years of active service.

Appendix 3: Employee engagement word search

Employee Engagement Mastering SuperVision PSU 2009

Find the words that occur in relation to employee engagement.



autonomy
contribution
goals
leadership
participation
productivity
rewards
support

challenging
dedication
growth
mission
patience
recognition
satisfaction
trust

commitment
encouragement
integrity
opportunity
performance
relationship
skills
understanding

communication
engagement
involvement
ownership
permission
resources
success
valued

Mastering SuperVision (2009)
Group Project - Employee Engagement

Paige Fyock, Computer Store
Anna Marie Nachman, Environment and Natural Resources Institute
Richard Stoller, Schreyer Honors College

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Additional resources on employee engagement

[Defining Employee Engagement: The Practice of Leadership](#)

[Wikipedia definition: Employee engagement](#)

[The David Zinger Model of Engagement for Results](#)

[Twenty-One Sure-Fire Ways Leaders Can Energize Themselves for Work](#)

[The Enlightened Manager: Employee Engagement](#)