

<i>Engaged</i>	<i>Not Engaged</i>	<i>Actively Disengaged</i>
		
High performer Innovative Efficient Committed Understands role High energy	Minimal effort Little passion Lack of creativity Increased absence Little motivation Checked out	Disruptive Very miserable Bad attitude Often late or absent Wastes time Undermines coworkers

## Employee Engagement: Gallup's Q12 Index

The single most important piece of human behavior research in the last 20 years (and a valuable shared idea of the world's greatest managers): people don't change that much. It doesn't make sense to waste time trying to put into people what was left out. It is more effective to try to draw out what was left in. That is hard enough. Gallup research has been able to identify the workplace factors that are most effective in "drawing out" what is left in. Not all of these factors are what might be predicted:

83% of executives and 84% of employees consider employee engagement a top factor in company success – *but* – what executives typically think engages employees usually differs from *their* reports

- Executives typically identify the more **tangible elements** as most important (wages, job security)
  - ✓ *A word about incentives:* money works only to a certain point. When you do work that requires innovation and creativity, things change. Einstein didn't produce his complex theories just because he wanted to get paid. At best, incentives only allow someone to do *better* what they already do well, or what is already possible; and that's *if* – in fact – the offered incentives are meaningful to that person *at all*.
- Employees report: the **less tangible elements matter more** (appreciation; feeling "in" on things)
  - ✓ Employees are more interested in: being connected to their managers; feeling like there is a purpose to their work; having growth opportunities; believing in their company and its future.

All employees in the study (especially millennials) demonstrated an urgent need for their work to **have meaning** beyond making a profit. They had to perceive that **they mattered** in the scheme of things.



About \$1.5B (70% of major US companies) is spent annually to measure employee engagement, but most companies don't actually work to *build* employee engagement. Gallup's study related to engagement, the Q12 Index, isolated the factors that build **discretionary effort**: the "above and beyond," "going the extra mile"-effort that is the hallmark of an engaged employee. Discretionary effort is what employers **really** need from their people, but it is not something that can be mandated. The study results take the shape of 12 questions, whose contents can be used as a guide for improving engagement and for addressing how to get people rowing in the right direction (note: in the 12 factors below how all the five human needs are well represented [safety, belonging, fun, power, freedom]).

The 12 Gallup Q12 Index questions identify the following workplace factors as critical for engagement:

1. Clear expectations
2. Sufficient materials and equipment
3. Daily opportunities to use individual strengths
4. Weekly recognition and/or praise for quality work
5. A manager who cares (or someone else at work)
6. Individual development is encouraged
7. Individual opinions are valued (and they matter)
8. Clear connection between company mission and job
9. Peers who are engaged, working toward shared goals
10. Social support: at least one friend
11. A minimum of semi-annual discussions related to individual progress
12. A minimum of annual opportunities for individual development



**Select three of the items above; write a brief plan for what you could do to impact these:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Help your employees work toward their full potential and view themselves as essential to the business, and you will harvest more of their discretionary effort and increase their engagement.