

Ask, listen, take action

Three steps to building associate engagement

No matter the size of your business, associate engagement can be a deciding factor in your growth and success. For many, culture drives the focus, yet a strong culture doesn't necessarily translate to high associate engagement.



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At Safelite, we're proud of our people-first culture. We know that happy and talented people who create happy customers will, in turn, deliver extraordinary business results. This is why we never lose sight of measuring and growing our engagement.

Why does engagement matter? It's simple. Highly engaged people exert greater effort and passion over mentally checking out at work. Being happy and involved in something they believe in leads them to willingly work harder with an increased commitment to their organization.

I believe you drive associate engagement by modifying or strengthening behaviors at the individual level and break it down into three simple steps: ask, listen and take action.

Ask

Start with your leaders, your frontline supervisors and managers. Ask them to share their expectations and impressions of your company's culture. Before moving forward, confirm you're all on the same page regarding what's most important to your business.

The next component of ask is a two-parter — talk to your associates, but first ensure you've established a culture of trust. Your associates will be open with you if they feel that you truly care about them and value their opinions.

For larger companies, efficiency often necessitates a broad, generalized survey, but you'll get better, more authentic feedback from face-to-face interactions. If possible, arrange brief, informal associate roundtables or one-on-one meetings where

you can discuss experiences, perceptions and how to improve the workplace.

Listen

When your associates share their thoughts, pay close attention to what they're saying. The biggest benefit of feedback is gathering ideas to improve your business. Employers may fear that surveys or meetings open the door to complaint sessions, but having a culture of trust where associates feel safe to share honest feedback will only increase engagement in the long run.

Holding roundtables or one-on-ones? Refrain from attempting to solve problems in the moment. Gather information and consider holding skip level meetings.

Take action

You've created that culture of trust and gathered your associates' ideas and feedback. Now you need to do something about it. Work collaboratively with your team as much as possible when sorting through ideas to determine those with the greatest impact.

If your associates ask for something you can't provide, tell them why and discuss other solutions. For example, perhaps you can't add a fitness space to your office, but you can partner with local gyms to offer a discount on memberships. When people understand the reasoning behind decisions and feel included in them, they're more likely to accept the results because they were part of the process. Truth and transparency rule.

Remember: Your efforts to increase associate engagement will be worth it. By asking, listening and taking action, you'll develop engaged associates who are happier, more loyal and more productive. Most likely, your bottom line will benefit, too. ●