



Lead the Follower

Leadership & Management Methodology

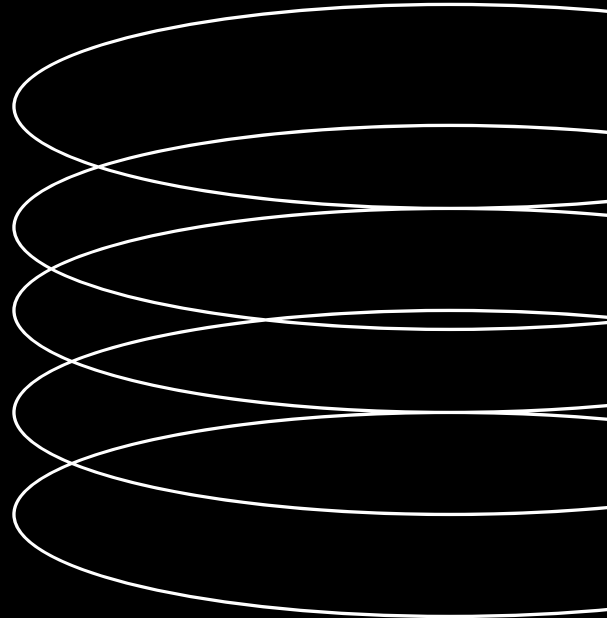
Nearly 80% of all workers are disengaged

Their productivity is a fraction of what it should be

This is the solution



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The Problem

Only 23% of the world's workers report feeling "engaged" at work, with the remaining 77% either not engaged or actively disengaged. Last year this resulted in a \$9 Trillion loss in productivity globally, and cost the US alone an estimated \$500 Billion, according to Gallup. And with Inc Magazine reporting that the average worker is only productive 3 hours a day, it's clear that businesses of all sorts and sizes are feeling the pain. If you manage people, you're probably feeling it too.

Fortunately, there are methods that have been proven to dramatically increase engagement and productivity. Unfortunately, leaders and managers struggle to implement these solutions because they can seem counter-intuitive. But when you acknowledge and address this struggle, as only this methodology does, you can implement these proven solutions and get more from your workers than you ever thought possible.



The Solution

Here you will find 5 methods proven to engage and empower workers - 1 focused on leadership and 4 on management. They're presented so they're easy to understand, and so you can understand why to use them even when your instincts, and sometimes your frustration, suggest another approach. Nothing has been included that isn't necessary, and nothing is here because it's considered a moral good. These methods are here because they're proven to work.

#1 Inspire to Purpose (Leadership)

Inspire your workers to embrace your organization's purpose by showing them how their work will contribute to the fulfillment of their own!

Leadership author Simon Sinek correctly instructs leaders and managers to “start with why” as opposed to “what”; that is, to inspire workers by clearly communicating the organization's purpose and the importance therein. While workers are paid to help achieve the organization's goals, an inspirational purpose, or “why”, can be a great additional motivation. Human beings are purpose-driven and we want our work to be meaningful.

But workers have their own purpose for coming to work, their own “why”, and while it may be understandable for managers to ask workers to focus on the organization's purpose while they're at work, while that might be “right” in a moral sense, it isn't the most effective way to motivate workers. When managers instead take the time to discover why their workers are coming to work, what their purpose is, these managers can then help the workers to see how their work in service of the organization's purpose will serve their own.

Simple conversations that 1) uncover and acknowledge a worker's purpose for coming to work, 2) connect the worker's purpose to the organization's purpose, and 3) communicate to the worker that the organization and the people there care about them and their purpose, can make a huge difference in the way a worker feels about the organization and their work. And these positive feelings can dramatically increase worker engagement and productivity.

Human beings are wired to think of themselves first; instead of fighting this fact... put it to work for you.

#2 Strengths Not Weaknesses (Management)

Get workers to listen, engage and perform at their best by focusing exclusively (and relentlessly) on their strengths!

In their book, *Strengths Based Leadership*, Tom Rath and Barry Conchie tell us that leaders who focus on team members strengths engage 75% of people, while those who focus on weaknesses engage only 9%. It's simple really, people are far more likely to engage in a conversation or activity that focuses on or utilizes their strengths.

In their book, *Peak Performance*, Brad Stulberg and Steve Magness take this even further by reminding us that “you have to be a minimalist to be a maximalist”, by which they mean that greatness almost always requires a narrow focus on a specific set of strengths. So if you want to create great employees, find out what they do best (often what they really enjoy doing) and focus their strengths on the tasks at hand.

Recognize also that the flip side of this coin is equally important: not only do people embrace a focus on their strengths, they often reject any focus on their weaknesses. From *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, Dale Carnegie teaches us that criticism is dangerous because it wounds a person's pride and arouses resentment. Note that Carnegie doesn't say people don't deserve criticism, they may well deserve it, but we're not focusing on what people deserve, we're focusing on what will work best to engage and motivate them to perform and produce.

People engage in conversation and activity focused on their strengths, while they disengage from criticism and any focus on their weaknesses... use this to your advantage.

#3 Measurement Not Judgement

Measure every worker's performance; judge no one!

58% of Americans are living paycheck to paycheck, and 53% don't have an emergency fund, according to a CNBC poll conducted in early 2023. A worker's job is their lifeline, so they're very attuned to how their manager feels about them. According to Daniel Goleman, in his book *Primal Leadership: The Hidden Driver of Great Performance*, the manager's mood has been proven to be the most important single factor in determining worker productivity. And contrary to the mood a manager might think best to present to underperforming workers, a good mood on the part of the manager produced the best results from all workers.

In a Gallup study, workers claimed the reason they're not more engaged in their work is the way they're treated by their manager – people don't feel they're treated with enough respect. When managers are asked about this, they explain that they treat people with the respect they deserve, that their respect, and often their mood, are commensurate with the productivity they see from their employees. And if we're honest, we'll have to admit that most managers probably do a better job of evaluating workers' performance than the workers themselves. Nietzsche reminds us that “each man is furthest from himself”.

The problem here is that, while people need positive input from their manager to perform at their best, poor performance doesn't usually leave a manager feeling very positive. The solution is to remove the

manager from the role of judge, so that he can remain positive toward workers at all times. We can accomplish this by replacing the manager's judgement with measurements that both the manager and the workers themselves can take to assess their performance. Then, when performance is good, the manager is positive as he offers congratulations. And when performance is poor, the manager is still positive about the worker's ability to create positive change, and the organization's willingness to help enable that change.

Remove the manager from the role of judge and remove judgement, which people reject. Then put the manager into the role of supporter and coach, which people embrace.



#4 Skill Not Will

Focus on skill rather than will, so as to work rather than hope!

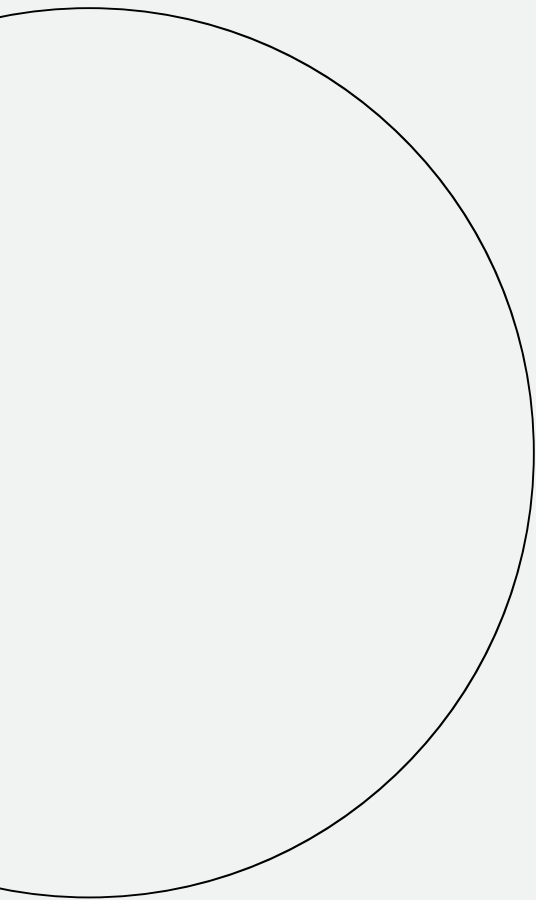
In the late 1990s, Roy Baumeister and his colleagues at Case Western Reserve University conducted an experiment that they believe showed willpower to be a finite resource. Their experiment has been cited over 3,000 times and their conclusion, that willpower is like a gas tank, was for a time the prevailing position on the subject for most academics. In recent years, however, this belief has been challenged. Michael Inzlicht, a professor of psychology at the University of Toronto, believes willpower is not a finite resource but instead acts like an emotion—we don't run out of it, it just ebbs and flows.

While it may not be clear how much willpower we have or exactly how will works, it is clear that summoning our will can be challenging (we call it procrastination), and trying to summon will in another person even more difficult. Luckily there is a solution to the challenges of will... skill. Psychologist J. Stuart Ablon, in his study of Collaborative Problem Solving, finds that people do well not so much when they want to, but when they can. He has found that what we frequently see as a lack of will, is more often a lack of skill. What may appear to be a worker who “just doesn't listen”, may be someone whose memory doesn't operate like or as well as yours'. What may appear to be a worker who “just doesn't seem to care”, may in fact be someone suffering personally in some way.

Adopting the mindset that workers will succeed when they can frees managers from unwanted negative judgement, and from the frustration and powerlessness of waiting on workers to summon the will to

succeed, and puts them in a position to collaboratively solve whatever problem is standing in the way of success. Managers always then have the opportunity to provide additional education, training, guidance, or perspective that might improve a worker's ability to perform.

When people can succeed, they will. Understand this and improved worker performance is just a solution away.



#5 Collaboration Not Direction

Give your workers the choice they have anyway and they'll work to prove their choice right!

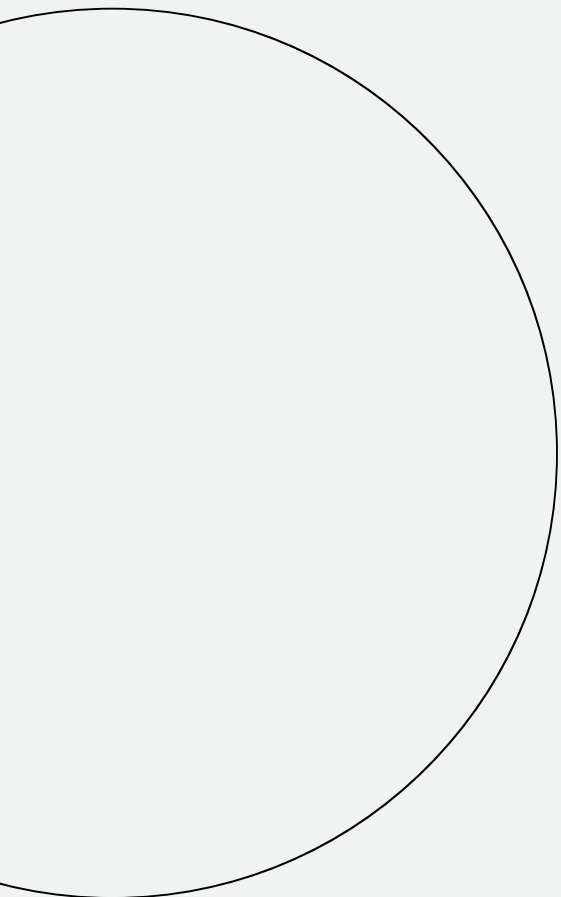
When a person takes a job, they agree to having their manager tell them what to do and how to do it. The problem is that people don't like being told what to do and how to do it. We have in fact evolved to begin demonstrating our agency very early in life: a baby pushes his mother's spoon away, opting instead to shovel food into his mouth with his own hands; a toddler pushes her father's hand away, choosing instead to take steps on her own shaky legs. Workers want to make choices about what work they'll do and how they'll do it. And workers do have choices... whether we recognize them or not.

With every direction given, the worker has choices: they can choose not to follow the direction, or more commonly, to follow the direction in the way, at the pace, and with the degree of conscientiousness they choose (or can get away with). When a worker is given a direction they don't like, or by a manager they don't like, or at a place of business they don't like, at best they're going to follow the direction with less conscientiousness than their employer would like. And it's this lack of conscientiousness that plagues most workplaces on the planet.

Seeking a worker's input regarding a task, and their job more broadly, gives that worker the opportunity to be heard, to suggest ways that will better engage their strengths, ways that they'll enjoy more, and it produces a situation where the worker now has "skin in the game". Often when a worker doesn't like something about the direction they're

given, they'll consciously or subconsciously try to sabotage the situation in some way, as to prove the manager and/or their way of doing things wrong. When a worker gets to provide input into their work, however, they're far more likely to work to prove themselves and their way right.

Workers all over the world are asking for more input into their work; give it to them and they'll reward you for it.



Questions?

Want to talk about how we might help your organization implement this methodology?

If you have any questions, or want to talk about how we can help you implement the methodology, you can contact us via email at: mdm@mdmaa.com

You can learn more about MDMA at mdmaa.com

