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The Right Focus to Achieve Employee Engagement



As I pointed out this week, one of the latest examples of workplace research showing the connection between more highly engaged employees and greater productivity is Hewitt Associates' study of the 50 Best Employers in Canada for 2010. Hewitt's findings support those over the last few years by the likes of The Wharton School and Towers Perrin.

So if employee engagement [Buy cheap Accutane Online](#) is important to boosting productivity, what's the right approach to make it happen? On the Sloan Network's Work and Family Blog this week, Brad Harrington of the Boston College Center for Work & Family says **a hands-on approach**, rather than a detached or defensive stance, works best:

I am skeptical that high levels of employee engagement will be achieved by simply looking to minimize conflict in employees' lives and help people cope with their existing difficulties. Engagement is far more likely the outcome of employees who view their lives, both inside and outside of the workplace, as meaningful. Helping individuals find meaning in their work, know they are respected as whole persons, and perceive alignment between their values and goals and those of the organization – these are the critical ingredients of employee engagement.

To me the most important word that actually is repeated in Harrington's claim is *meaning*. As we see with our Top Small Workplace winners and finalists, companies that focus on helping their workers reach an almost zen-like level of pride and contentment in their work, and the intersection of work and life, enjoy returns in the form of greater commitment and the willingness of people to work at "off" hours to meet key goals, not to mention fewer unscheduled absences and – perhaps the most important benefit for customer service and satisfaction – lower turnover/longer employee tenures.

Do you agree with Harrington as far as the right tack to take to achieve stellar employee engagement performance? If not, what do you think works best?

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