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John Spence: People and Work Culture Key to Creating High-Performance Organization

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One of the more recent blogs I've started following to help me glean insights to share here is Achieving Business Excellence by John Spence. In fact last week I retweeted (*shared*, for those not versed in Twitter-speak) Spence's post on three keys to employee engagement.

Spence is author of *Awesomely Simple: Essential Business Strategies for Turning Ideas Into Action*. In an earlier post from September, he explained how he boiled his 10,000+ pages of research for the book into a one-page "strategy map," and then inputted that into Wordle to create a word cloud – an at-a-glance visualization – of the key strategies for creating high-performance organizations.

Here it is:

It's reaffirming to what Winning Workplaces believes and does with respect to helping small firms build more productive workplaces to see that *people* and *culture* are the largest-sized strategies, meaning they are most meaningful in Spence's research. They rank higher than *leaders*, *communication*, *transparency*, and even *customer[s]*.

For me, the bottom line of Spence's research-based word cloud is that it's not just lip service to say "People are our greatest asset" – and, there is opportunity for business leaders in creating work environments and implementing people practices which support that claim.

My thanks to Becky McCray at Small Biz Survival for pointing me to Spence's blog and post.

Related: Longtime readers may remember me mentioning Wordle; I used the free tool to create our own word clouds on the value our Top Small Company Workplace award applicants get from the experience, as well as the prevailing industries and business conditions of our 2010 award applicants.

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