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**Best Company Survey**  
Maximising the power of  
your people



## Employee engagement, like culture, has become a CEO-level issue.

From the get-go companies need to acknowledge that there is a need for a new approach to employee engagement – one that builds on the foundation of culture and engagement to focus on the employee experience holistically while considering all the contributors to worker satisfaction, engagement, wellness and alignment. Companies either compete in or complete workplace satisfaction surveys. There is an escalating war to design great workspaces, provide flexible benefits, and create great corporate cultures in an effort to drive higher engagement.

Companies, more than ever before are under pressure, and challenged to provide the 'ultimate' employee experience for their employees. The goal for creating these experiences, is to encourage and drive the optimal productivity levels from their employees and to be considered 'an employer of choice'. Concurrently employees have high demands and expectations from their employers to ensure that their day-to-day and long-term expectations are being supported, and

considered. It can be argued that when a company's culture is aligned with its values, the company attracts employees who feel comfortable with that culture. This in turn helps companies to motivate people, which leads to a high level of employee engagement.

With this in mind, employers are having to consider what their workforce and workplace of the future will look like, as the gap between technological sophistication and business productivity (engagement) continues to increase. Companies are struggling to handle the pace of change in terms of technological advances, and how this translates into creating an employee experience which is matching and mirroring life outside of the workplace. Fifty-nine percent of South African companies which took part in the [Deloitte 2017 Human Capital Trends Report](#) for South Africa, identified that they are not ready in terms of understanding and implementing a clear employee experience strategy.

At the advent of the [millennial workforce](#), companies are under pressure to move away from old hierarchical structures into a more collaborative environment. Companies need to be able to identify what is unique about their brand to assist with both current and future workforce planning.

To this point Dr Travis Bradberry notes in his book, *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* on 9 ways that bad managers can make people quit. Dr Travis comments on these issues to be key issues in causing employees to quit and highlights that overworking employees and failing to recognise and reward good work is a key factor. He notes:

*"The most talented employees want feedback – more so than the less talented ones – and it's your job to keep it coming. If you don't, your best people will grow bored and complacent... If you want your best people to stay, you need to think carefully about how you treat them. While good employees are as tough as nails, their talent gives them an abundance of options. You need to make them want to work for you!"*

Moreover, there is a struggle within companies in bridging the gap across the generations to understand how to meet the demands of their new workforce. It is predicted that by 2020, up to fifty percent of any company's workforce will be millennials.

The [Deloitte 2017 Human Capital Trends Report](#) for South Africa highlighted that millennials place a high premium on flexibility, creativity and purpose at work. These young workers are accustomed to moving jobs more frequently, and companies have to respond by providing development more quickly, moving people around more regularly, providing continuous cycles of promotion, and giving employees more tools to manage their own careers.<sup>2</sup>

Whilst millennials are important to understanding in terms of what drives their engagement, the workplace environment must not only be focused on understanding this generation. Within every generation, there are common expectations at a human level of what an individual wants from their workplace. All employees have a desire to enjoy their job and be valued.

Therefore, Deloitte has migrated its [Best Company Survey](#) away from a competition and employee satisfaction investigation into providing an output of strategic insights for increased organisational effectiveness. The survey allows a company to understand what their focus and leverage areas are, and provides the first steps towards cultivating an environment which manages employee expectations, of not only multi-generations, but also the mix of personalities within an organisation.

In summary, the employee experience is a combination of understanding both culture and engagement. Employee experience includes providing meaningful work and jobs, and designing a work environment that engages people. Identifying what makes a brand unique, and what impacts an employee's day-to-day experience is essential to unlocking the strength of a company's competitive advantage. It is crucial for all companies to be attractive to existing and potential employees; it is equally as important for companies to understand the mix of individuals whom are committed to driving and delivering on the company brand. The aim of the *Best Company Survey* is to identify the levers that will assist you in optimally leading your only true competitive advantage: your people.

At the core companies need to look at two key index measurements when deploying an employee engagement programme:

1. The attractiveness and 2. Engagement. Attractiveness looks at the employee's alignment to the brand and attractiveness of the company. Engagement is the sum of attraction plus activation and the measurement of the employee's individual discretionary effort to the company. Companies need smart analytics to enable them to identify which of its organisational attributes influence employee's behaviour in either a positive or a negative manner.

Taking it to a more granular level, [Deloitte's Best Company Survey](#) reporting calculates attractiveness based on how employees respond to statements which are categorised within the following dimensions – Accomplishment and Growth, Values and Culture, Fairness and Integrity and Care and Feedback. The responses to these dimensions are prioritised in terms of importance via smart analytics – an impact score. Organisations are then effectively able to address in terms of priority/ impact what needs to be improved and what needs to be celebrated to maintain and increase levels of organisational attractiveness. Engagement is the sum of how activated plus attracted individuals are to the company, and focuses on key questions which are able to assess how employees think, act and feel within the company on a day-to-day basis, and how this impacts their discretionary effort.

Interestingly, reflecting on analysis from the 2016 Best Company Survey participation the key issue for high flyers (engaged) across all generations at high performing companies (high level of attraction/high Best Company Score) was equal pay and benefits. Reflections on the analysis have shown that in a high performing company, their millennial high flyers (engaged) demonstrate that overall they are happy and believe the company is meeting the majority of their expectations.

For low performing companies (low level of attractiveness/low Best Company Score) their millennial high flyers (engaged) portion demonstrated that the company failed to deliver on promises with issues of long-term career development and leadership creeping into the mix. On the opposite side of the coin, millennial resigned (disengaged) individuals at low performing companies, have issues around delivery on promises, personal accomplishment, long-term career development, and retention.

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