

By Mark Hemming, Senior Consultant, Festo Training & Consulting

Champion or Saboteur – it's all about engagement



Ten years ago, if we asked a room full of managers and directors from top-end companies, “How many of you work for an organisation that has formal policies to manage disengaged employees out of your company?” only a few hands would go in the air. Today, when we ask the same question, nearly all hands go up. It’s taken decades or more but finally industry has woken up to the fact that disengaged employees cost them a lot of money.

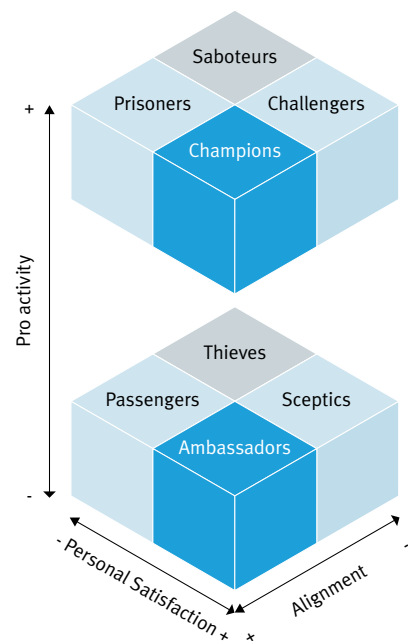
Now ask these same managers, “How clear is it to your most valued and motivated employees that you manage disengaged employees differently?” and most hands hesitate to rise. This is now the biggest challenge facing managers with people management responsibilities. Do I manage everyone the same way and risk losing my top performers? How do I manage people

with different levels of engagement without being accused of unfair differentiation? This is the aspect of employee engagement that takes the topic full circle.

It is now generally accepted that poor people management has caused much of the disengagement that we suffer from today. But as companies seek to climb out of recession and be fitter and leaner

for the future, many of those same ‘people managers’ have to raise their game.

Let’s look at how we can analyse these different aspects of employee engagement. We’ve developed a 3-D model for employee engagement. The three distinct dimensions of this are:



3 Dimensions of Engagement.

1. Alignment

This element considers how well aligned an individual is to the company’s strategy and culture, and how well the company is aligned to the needs of the employee.

++	Highly aligned:	Advocates culture and strategy
+	Well aligned:	Overtly supportive of company
⊙	Neutral:	Generally unsupportive or negative
-	Not aligned:	Overtly opposes culture or strategy

2. Personal Satisfaction

The personal satisfaction dimension considers how satisfied each team member is with his or her current role, responsibilities and rewards.

++	Highly satisfied
+	Satisfied
⊙	Neutral
-	Unsatisfied
--	Highly unsatisfied

3. Drive – Proactive or Reactive

This is a critical dimension and identifies how proactive or reactive a person is.

+	Proactive:	Exhibits high drive and energy. Influences colleagues
⊙	Interactive:	Participative and interacts naturally with colleagues
-	Reactive:	Generally stands back and tends not to get involved.

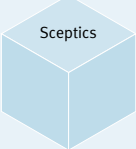
Considering these three elements allows for accurate identification and grouping into 8 specific character ‘types’. The importance of this grouping means that different engagement and communication strategies can be put in place.

For ease of identification we’ve created personality profiles for each of the character types and attributed them to specific roles. Please note, these characters are entirely fictitious and are there purely for the purpose of explanation. ➔

Not Engaged

A Sceptic

Not Engaged	Satisfied +	Not Aligned --	Reactive
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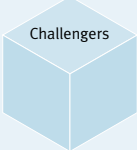


I'm Joshua Stanley and I was one of the first employees to be taken on when the company began. My job then was Production Operative and I'm doing the same job to this day. I'm proud of what I do and my manager tells me that I do a good job. Sometimes I get worried because I'm not as fast as the young kids and I doubt I'll make it to retirement age.

Everything seems to be driven by all our new, fresh-faced managers and directors. The policy used to be you couldn't be a manager until you'd been here for five years. Now, they just walk in the door and whoosh, we're off on another change. When you've been around as long as I have you know that nothing is really new. Other people seem to think that everything is for the best but they must have short memories because we've tried most of this stuff before and it didn't work then, so why should it work now?

A Challenger

Not Engaged	Satisfied +	Not Aligned --	Proactive
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I like my job but not having to cope with all the changes. I'm Denise Stevens and I work in the Purchasing Department and order all the raw materials for Production. We've always done a good job but now they want us to push our suppliers for better prices to reduce our costs! It's all about restructuring. I've had enough, so I told my manager we have good relationships with all our suppliers and we don't want to upset them.

After a few days my manager gave my team a lecture about the plans of the company and how the Directors want us all to play a part in its success. Yeah right! So I said, "How are all these fancy business plans going to help us get lower prices from our suppliers? Why don't you and the Directors come and spend a week in our department and show us how to do it?" He didn't have an answer for that and he's not mentioned it again since.

- Alignment

A Thief

Actively Disengaged	Dissatisfied --	Not Aligned --	Reactive
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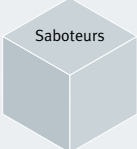


My name's Ronnie Cotterel, I've been here 18 months and I work as a Sales Consultant. I was headhunted from a competitor, but I'm looking to leave as soon as another job opportunity comes along. When I first came here it was like a breath of fresh air after what I'd been used to. Don't get me wrong, I'm working with a lot of nice people, but how am I supposed to hit my crazy sales targets when I spend half of my time in internal meetings, training workshops and completing endless, repetitive reports and database updates.

It wouldn't be quite so bad if the management recognised all this time off the road by guaranteeing our commissions and bonuses but they won't hear of it. So I'll just keep my head down, take everything from this situation that benefits me and move on when we're ready.

A Saboteur

Actively Disengaged	Dissatisfied --	Not Aligned --	Proactive
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Twice I've been declined for Director of Marketing. How can the kid they employed do what I can do? How can he possibly know all that I, Martin Smith, know about the company, how we should manage the people and promote the business?


You'd be amazed at just how gullible your fellow employees can be. They hang on my every word and then spread the contagions that I feed them across the company! Perhaps I was like them once, all pumped up by Goals, Vision and Values. Fifteen years I've been here giving them everything and what do I get in return? Nothing! I've been actively looking for another appointment and there's not been a shortage of offers for a guy like me. I'll just take my time and ensure that I get what I want.

Satisfaction

Engaged

An Ambassador

Engaged	Satisfied ++	Aligned ++	Reactive
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Ambassadors

I'm Henry Roberts and Sales Manager. I directly manage a team of seven men and women, and my style is 'supportive' rather than 'leading from the front'. It's important that the team are able to maximise their time in front of their customers. They reach out to me when they experience supply or processing issues and I'm always on hand to give them words of support or steer them in the right direction.

We have very few 'personal performance' issues. Similarly, I don't have to constantly remind them of the need to hit our targets, they do it anyway and in my view, this is a good way to be. I regularly host customer visits and I'm often described as "the face of the company".

A Champion

Engaged	Satisfied ++	Aligned ++	Proactive
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Champions


My name is Elizabeth Conroy-Yeng. I am the Production Director and clinched the appointment because I had a well-considered policy on Employee Engagement. Irrespective of how difficult it may be I believe every company should have a policy to manage disengagement out of its organisation!

I introduced very clear policies to this effect. Consequently, we have increased our production output by 18% whilst at the same time, reducing our net production costs by over 23%. We still have some way to go but I am extremely proud of our department and the fantastic proactive contributions that so many of our people are making!

+ Alignment

A Passenger

Not Engaged	Dissatisfied --	Aligned +	Reactive
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Passengers

I'm Rachel Allan and I work as Personal Assistant to two Sales Managers. It's just my luck that instead of 'streamlining' my workload as was promised, both my managers more than double it by always wanting work done their particular way – that means everything has to be done twice. And then they say at my appraisal, "Rachel, you're 'not proactive' enough!"


I think my college education is wasted in this job. Yes, it was exciting to begin with and the company is doing well, but once you've compiled one set of spreadsheets you've compiled them all. Martin Smith sat next to me at lunch the other day he said he's heard that in the next round of efficiency and cost improvements, the Directors are going to do away with PA's, except for those assigned to themselves. I hope a nice new job opportunity comes along soon!

A Prisoner

Not Engaged	Dissatisfied --	Aligned +	Proactive
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I feel like a 'Prisoner' in this job! I understand where we are going as a company and some of the initiatives are great but us employees aren't heard and therefore can't contribute to our future success. I'm Ralph Robinson and I'm a Goods Received Inspector. I've suggested many times that we could save time and cost if we cut out the Stores and move the items directly to the production lines. I read somewhere this is called 'Trackside' supply. Have they taken any notice? No!

This lack of recognition really gets to me, so much so that I've been for interviews at other companies. Of course they make their jobs and companies sound fantastic but it only takes a couple of probing questions to discover that perhaps they're not all they pretend to be. I'm dissatisfied because an ordinary employee can only contribute through what he does, not through what he thinks!



Prisoners

Satisfaction

Not Engaged ➔

The challenge of managing different character ‘types’

Employee engagement is not static. Many employees can be re-engaged with the right communication. Saboteurs and Thieves who are in the actively disengaged quadrant force their manager or the company to make a very conscious decision – do we risk frustrating and de-motivating the rest of our

employees by managing them in the same way as everyone else, or do we draw attention to them and play into their hands, by trying to isolate them and the damage they can cause?

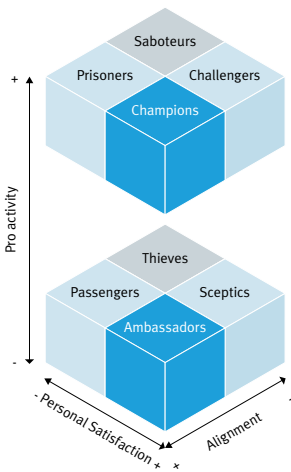
Actively managing disengaged employees out of an organisation is

controversial but absolutely must be considered, as long as legislative procedures and rules are closely followed to avoid any potential acts of discrimination on unsubstantiated grounds.

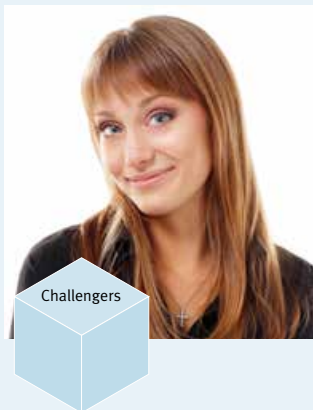
Engaged Employees		Actively Disengaged Employees	
			
<p>It is easy to think that because Champions are highly engaged, well aligned to the organisation and the organisation aligned to them and they are successful in their work that they need no management. They do however have a low tolerance of actively disengaged employees and this needs to be closely monitored. They need continual challenges and stimulation, and while many feel satisfied with their achievements, others feel they can always do more.</p>	<p>Because Ambassadors are reactive by nature they need to be presented with opportunities to support new initiatives rather than being expected to drive them forward. They do need to feel valued by the organisation and they need recognition for the work that they do.</p>	<p>Saboteurs are potentially the most dangerous of disengaged employees because they are proactive. They seldom act without purpose, and demonstrate the disengaged practice of ‘consent and evade’. Equally their attitude can be somewhat confusing or complex. Some Saboteurs will exhibit a positive attitude about themselves but harbour a very negative attitude towards the company.</p> <p>Many have ‘people-oriented’ behaviour tendencies but they can be resentful or vindictive towards the company or even specific individuals. Occasionally, they can be empowered with responsibilities that motivate them and provide a vehicle through which they can show-off their positive attributes. Over time, some Saboteurs can become strong Champions but there remains the question of trust.</p>	<p>Thieves are reactive by nature but their agenda is to take whatever they can from the company and sometimes other employees as well. This includes time, information, training, material goods, money, data, software and anything that they think will benefit them now or in the future.</p> <p>Some will want to ‘look good’ and stand out as it may ‘cover’ their real intentions. Others tend to try and ‘hide’ within the group. Equally, Thieves might brag about their accomplishments to others in an attempt to encourage them to do the same.</p>

Not engaged employees
Challengers, Sceptics, Prisoners and Passengers represent around 60 - 65% of an average UK workforce. Some analysts refer to them as 'Residents' advising that if 'influenced', they can become more positive or negative in the workplace. In the case of 'Challengers', involving them

in sustained, high quality, 2-way communication can produce very positive outcomes.



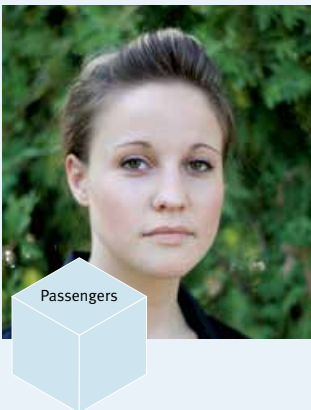
Not Engaged Employees



An important note is that even if Challengers say that they're aligned to the company they are not and the company is unlikely to be aligned to meeting their needs either. They are proactive, often as a result of external stimuli. They are not afraid to speak their mind, although for some this can be driven by insecurity. This can be disruptive and often stems from their lack of alignment. Equally, their open challenges, if fuelled by emotional aggression, can alienate them from their work colleagues.



Because Sceptics are reactive they will only tend to express their opinions in a secure environment. Their scepticism is usually a form of mental comparison – the 'now' versus 'previous experience'. Their scepticism reflects doubt, often fuelled by their lack of alignment in the workplace and sometimes driven by their own insecurities. Although they will have a low tolerance of actively disengaged employees, many will not say so. However, they may express their sceptical views if action is openly taken to deal with them.



Passengers are reactive by nature and may only express their views when asked to do so, although some patience may be required to facilitate this. However, what they say can have value and relevance because they are aligned to the company and the company is aligned to them. Attitudes about themselves may vary considerably and they have the potential to be good workers although this will vary with mood. Those with a negative attitude and openly expressed dissatisfaction may alienate their colleagues.



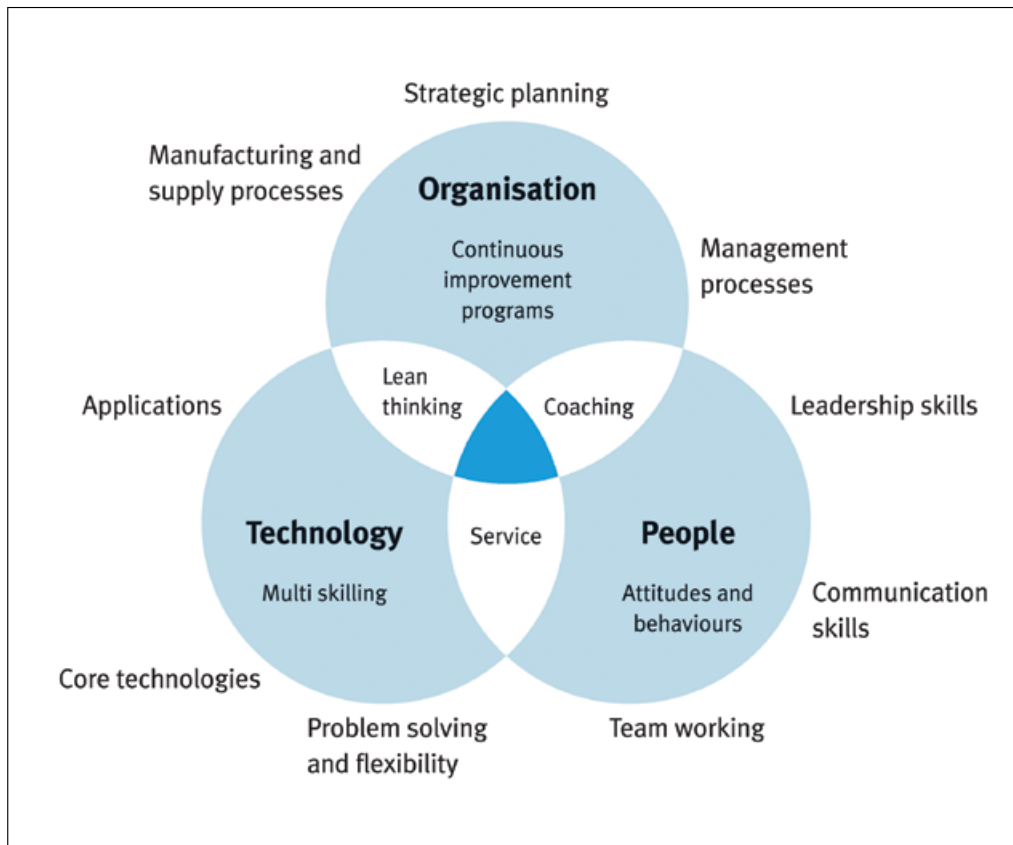
Prisoners have the potential to be disruptive in the workplace as a result of openly expressing their views on work related matters, although what they say, can often have relevance due to their alignment or understanding of the company's needs. They are inclined to be proactive but this can change if their overall dissatisfaction provokes a negative attitude, often fuelled by estranging colleagues because of their open challenges. Potentially, they are at greater risk than Challengers and Sceptics of becoming actively disengaged.

Festo is producing a white paper on this subject. Please email info_gb@festo.com if you would like a copy.

Festo are offering delegates to Automate UK a chance to find out more about employee engagement by offering a number of free places on a one day workshop - 'Don't Just Feed Me Chicken! - Leadership principles to engage, enable and empower employees.' To take up your free place, speak to someone from Festo at the event or email info_gb@festo.com for more information.

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Festo Training & Consulting specialises in the development of people, organisations and technology skills. Offering a range of open courses, structured development programmes and tailor-made, customer-specific projects, Festo trains over 42,000 delegates worldwide every year.



Support in three dimensions.
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Our aim is to enable clients to move from 'help' to 'self help'. We seek to involve the client as much as possible, so they are enabled to repeat or multiply

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Support in three dimensions

Festo Didactic offers a wide scope of training services in:

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Festo Ltd

Tel: 01604 667000 (option 0)
Fax: 01604 667001
Email: info_gb@festo.com
festo-didactic.co.uk