Engagement Survey: What is the intent behind each question?

Q6 – "There is someone at work that encourages my development."

It is difficult to gain traction on any of the other elements without the Sixth. Less than 1 percent of those who do not have someone advocating for their development are able to achieve real engagement with their employer through the strength of the other 11 elements. Conversely, nearly nine out of ten employees who report having someone at work who encourages their development (i.e., mentor) are classified as “engaged.” These statistics indicate that regardless of whether a company’s web site or HR department promises it, having a mentor is fundamental, part of the unwritten social contract most team members anticipate when they are hired.

A team member’s supervisor is usually first in line to fulfill this role, but he/she is not alone. Doctors are often managed by administrators who are not physicians, but look for advice from a medical/surgical chief or an approachable, more experienced doctor. Junior reporters may have their writing honed by editors, but they learn how to track down stories by following more senior reporters. Musicians follow the conductor, but they learn a substantial amount from those who play the same instrument.

Team members that do not feel like there is someone encouraging their development can still positively impact his/her engagement by adopting these vital behaviors:

- Determine your needs for personal / professional development and share your findings with your colleagues and supervisor.
- Ask your supervisor for new responsibilities and tasks. Be specific about the knowledge, skills and abilities you hope to develop through your request.
• Take advantage of online and live classes offered through the Learning Management System.
• Take advantage of the Medical Center’s educational assistance program to pursue formal education.
• Ask a colleague or superior to serve as your mentor. Explain to him/her what your needs are and create a plan for how they can provide ongoing assistance.
• Model the expectation by asking about a colleague’s development interests and then help them come up with a plan to pursue those interests.

For leaders, it is essential to track and follow-up on developmental growth and shortcomings so that team members feel supported and motivated to continuously learn and grow in their roles. Frequently ask about the individual’s progress and provide assistance when they experience difficulties. Make development a part of the performance appraisal discussion and overly reward forward progress.

Additional tools and resources can be found on the Employee Engagement Website