Q8 – "The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important."

The strange thing about the Eighth Element is how unimportant it is to the job itself and the team member’s material well-being (basic needs Q1-Q6). The absence of many of the other elements — job clarity, the proper equipment, a match with one’s talents, consistent feedback, etc. — can become real obstacles causing serious engagement issues. However, the same cannot be said for the Eighth Element, which is strictly an emotional need, and a higher-level one at that. That said, if a job were just a job, it really wouldn’t matter where someone worked. A good paycheck, decent benefits, reasonable hours and comfortable working conditions would be enough. The job would serve its function of putting food on the table and money in the kids’ college accounts. But a uniquely human twist occurs after the basic needs are fulfilled. Team Members begin to search for meaning in their job. For reasons that transcend the physical / basic needs fulfilled by earning a living, he/she looks for her contribution to a higher purpose. The team member looks for something in which to believe, something that aligns with their values and gives them a sense of importance.

Team members that do not believe the mission or purpose of UVA Health System makes them feel their job is important can still positively impact their perceptions by adopting the following vital behaviors:

- Engage your supervisor in a discussion about how your departmental and personal goals connect with the goals and objectives of the larger organization.
- Actively seek opportunities for exposure to organizational communications (Uteam Meetings, Connect, Help Desk announcements, etc).
• Learn more about the research and clinical discoveries occurring at the Medical Center.
• Create a list of everyone that depends on you to perform your job (Example: A team member working in Supply Chain has a downstream impact on the patient, clinical providers, Revenue Cycle, etc.)
• 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.

According to Gallup’s research, work units in the top quartile of the database on this element average from 5 to 15 percent higher profitability than bottom-quartile units. Mission-driven workgroups suffer 30 to 50 percent fewer accidents, and have 15 to 30 percent lower turnover. Team members who feel connected to the mission of their company are also more likely to report that humor and laughter plays a positive role in their productivity.

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