

## Tips for opportunities that stimulate employees' engagement

1. **Outside Speaker.** Your community has a wealth of people with experience relevant to the concept of employee engagement. For no more cost than the invitation, you can have them speak for 30-60 minutes to your team.
2. **Lunch and Learn.** Your employees know what makes them engage...and what prevents their engagement. Structure a regular session for discussion of such topics. Two hints: provide the lunch and invite employees to set the.
3. **Focus Groups.** If you're looking both to increase at-the-moment engagement by employees and learn new ways to do that, a focus group is a great idea. Invite a range of participants, from highly engaged to disengaged. Consider a facilitator from outside your department or company.
4. **Round Table Discussions.** At events offering ample time (planning sessions, department meetings, annual kickoff events, etc.), hold a 30-minute round table series. Give each table (6-seats) an engagement topic. Allow 10 minutes of around-the-table idea sharing. Have individuals move to different tables and repeat 3 times.
5. **Coaching/Mentoring.** A formal coaching/mentoring project creates three-way engagement. Coaches engage in sharing their information and expertise. Individuals being mentored engage in receiving and learning knowledge and skills. Both these engagements spill over to greater job-engagement by all concerned.
6. **Networking.** Discover and make available meetings, conferences, community gatherings in which your people can participate. People learn from people. They do not have to work at the same job or for the same company or even in the same industry. They do need the chance to meet one another and share ideas. These networking opportunities provide insights into engagement. *NOTE: It's up to you, the manager, to bring these insights to the surface, via follow-up discussions with your employees.*
7. **Staff/Business Retreat.** Too often viewed as an exorbitant time- and money-expense, even a half-day retreat for your immediate staff or (better still) your entire organization proves to be an engagement generating opportunity. Make a concentrated effort to have *increased employee engagement* a defined outcome of the event--whether you publicize that desire or not—and see long-term benefits.
8. **Engagement Trade Show.** Check your community for outside "engagement providers" such as training or coaching individuals, incentives vendors, human resources and EAP consultants, productivity consultants, and many more. Offer them the opportunity to set up tables for a during-lunch trade show. Remember, your intention need not be to purchase from these vendors. Your purpose is to give your employees an opportunity to engage (by looking, listening, asking, exploring) with engagement.