

ENGAGEMENT
IS NOT
ENOUGH

*You Need Passionate Employees
To Achieve Your Dream*

Keith E. Ayers



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FOREWORD

By Curt W. Coffman, Co-Author, *First, Break All the Rules, What the World's Greatest Managers Do Differently* (Simon & Schuster) and *Follow this Path*, (Warner Books) and Chief Science Officer for the MAJERS Corporation.

Engagement has become a very popular term, portraying all things related to business, from employee to customer and even shareholder. New metaphors are important as they help us transition, shedding old mental models and slipping into new ways of thinking. The problem with new language is that while it quickly generates common understanding, it tends to be soon misapplied. This misapplication prevents us from expanded learning. I once had a college professor who drew a circle on the blackboard and stated that the volume of the circle quantified what we know. He then declared that the circumference of the circle measured what we do not know. As the volume increases, so does the circumference.

Keith Ayers possesses an unending curiosity combined with a compelling need to make sense of challenging issues. His natural ability to observe—and then frame a concern with a practical understanding that leads to a solution—is a rare gift. While it is not always easy to stand eye-to-eye with tough and seemingly unsolvable challenges, he finds it energizing and motivating. Across the pages of this book, you will experience that “oomph” and true understanding of the human condition.

As you will see throughout this book, Keith has courageously expanded prior learning and, consequently, shown what needs to be unlearned. The importance of people's engagement within an organization is something no one debates. The problem organizations face today is how to insure the right leadership, strategy, and culture are in place to create and sustain engagement.

Engagement Is Not Enough provides a refreshing approach, not only to understanding the people side of enterprise, but also to how you can embrace it. Its broad attention, from the most basic human needs to the new demands of leadership, is both practical and immediately useful. Theory is good, but if that's what you want, buy a different book. This book is about real change and application.

Keith's position that passion is the outcome of involvement, attachment, and trust is proven through research and application. This position challenges you to examine the question: is true excellence possible without a deep sense of purpose and passion for what you do every day?

CHAPTER 1

Leadership That Ignites Passion

I met David McNally, a striking-looking individual and one of the founders of Integro in Australia, at a sales conference in Melbourne in late 1976. Over a couple of drinks, we had a conversation that changed, and continues to shape, my life. David founded Integro about six months before we met to help clients achieve their business goals, but our talk at first centered on the usual salesman banter we've all had at these sorts of conferences. I could not stop asking him questions about his new business; the idea that the success an organization achieves is dependent on the degree to which their employees and customers trust them fascinated me. The more David explained Integro to me, and the excitement and passion with which he did it, the more interested and enthralled I became. I was so completely sold on the idea that at one point in our conversation—and it wasn't the beer talking—I just blurted out, "I'd love to do what you do!"

His response was calm and simple. "Why don't you?"

I was taken aback. At that point in my life, public speaking terrified me. My sales experience was limited. To see myself as capable of selling consulting and training services to organizations was a big stretch, something I did not feel ready for or confident enough to take on. David listened to me and let me speak, but as I came up with all the reasons why I couldn't do it, he nodded as though he had heard those reasons before—perhaps in his own head before he formed Integro—and considered them poor excuses.

Finally, David interrupted me. “You know, if you wait until you are ready, you’ll be waiting the rest of your life. If this is something you really want to do, then you’ll learn much faster by doing it. My motto is: Bite off more than you can chew, and chew like hell!”

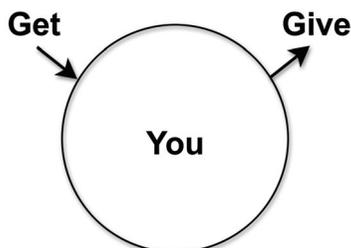
He was right. Two months later, I joined Integro. That initial self-doubt remained with me early on, but I grew out of it. I’m still here today, in fact, now the President of Integro because David saw some talent in me I had yet to see in myself. He was a true leader. Leaders recognize the talent others have and create opportunities for them to develop that talent and become the leaders they are capable of being. David invested in me because he saw someone who could help him realize his vision for Integro. His passion did not stop at his vision for Integro; he was passionate about helping people grow. His leadership helped instill that passion in me. I was, and am, forever grateful for that random conversation at the sales conference because that day I was challenged to become a leader.

Why Do You Want to Be a Leader?

It is an important question to ask yourself. Obviously, you like the prestige and status of the position and the power it brings; the higher up you are in the organization, the more control you have over the direction you go and the decisions made. But the benefits of leadership—things like increased control and greater compensation—are not ends in themselves. There must be some other motive beyond what you *get* out of being a leader. I suspect you already possess this motive if you are reading this book, so you also understand, like David and I, that there are goals beyond your own that determine your success as a leader.

You have to *give* something of value to others to *get* the rewards of being a leader. It’s called the **Give-Get Cycle**.

The Give-Get Cycle



Whether you lead a team, business unit, department, or the whole organization, your leadership role was created for a reason. Your role or position has a *purpose*, and that is to deliver output your organization needs to achieve its strategic objectives. The more effective you are as a leader, the more you *give* of your leadership talents, the more your team will deliver to the organization, and the more you will *get* in both rewards and satisfaction. From now on, I will use the word “team” to describe the group of people you lead. Whether your team is three people or a thousand people, the same principles apply.

What Kinds of People Do You Need on Your Team to Be Successful as a Leader?

Pause for a moment and think about this question; it is a critical question all leaders must answer. You need to be very clear about the *kinds of people* you need to create a work environment which attracts and retains these people. There are many leaders who are unintentionally and unwittingly creating an environment that drives away the very people they need and, in the process, diminishing their results.

Every time I ask leaders this question about *kinds of people* I get the same answers. In addition to having team members with talent and skill, you also want motivated self-starters who are team players, results-oriented, engaged, talented, committed, responsible, innovative, willing to learn, and embrace change. How would you rate your team today against these criteria? How many team members are all these things all the time? Are they all engaged? Committed? Talented? How many are some of these things some of the time? How many match very few of these things? How many of them could be these things?

Remember, everyone on your team is potentially passionate about what he or she does. This goes beyond mere engagement. When people are passionate, their hearts are in concert with their minds as they are committed to their goals and inspired to work at their best every day. How passionate they are depends on you, the leader. What kind of work environment do you need to create to get your team to be passionate all the time? How do you attract and retain talented, committed people? How much of this is solely up to you? Let’s have a look at an organization that has done these things.

Lighting a Fire Within

In early 2003, Unity Health Center was created out of a merger between two competing hospitals in Shawnee, Oklahoma. The primary goal of this merger was to convince Shawnee residents they did not need to travel to Oklahoma City to get quality healthcare. Like many healthcare facilities across the country, Unity

Health experienced a high level of turnover and had difficulty filling vacated positions. In 2002, there was an average of six to eight vacancies in each of six operating divisions that could not be filled. This led to the hospital being short-staffed by between forty and fifty people at a time, with the bulk of the short-staffing in nursing and support positions.

Said CEO Chuck Skillings at the time, “We needed to cease being competitors and become collaborators, united in our mission and vision. The name ‘Unity Health Center’ is a reflection of the spirit of unification that happens daily in a hospital, when groups of individuals such as doctors and nurses combine talents, abilities, and training to help others. We are committed to bringing technology and compassion together to fulfill our mission statement: Positively impacting human life through exceptional healthcare.”

To realize this new mission, hospital leaders at all levels had to create a work environment where all employees were empowered to make a positive difference in the lives and health of those they served.

Dawn Klinglesmith was the Director of Diagnostic Imaging at Unity Health at the time. She, like many healthcare managers, dealt with life and death situations every day. “My typical day was focused on directing and managing people. They would come to me with their problems and, of course, I would try and fix them. If they came to me for a decision, I would make it. I hadn’t really thought about the difference between leadership and management.”

This is a critical distinction. Dawn was initially skeptical about embracing the Integro leadership development process. She feared she would lose time that she just did not have by attending sessions instead of concentrating on her more important duties. This leadership process was a long-term commitment that included meeting with her staff in both group and one-on-one meetings and required Dawn to apply the principles in real-time at the hospital. Fortunately, she did it with an open mind and, over the next few months, she started to see differences in the way staff interacted with patients and in her own leadership approach.

Now when team members approached her with a problem, she did not simply tell them the solution and expect them to act it out. Instead, she asked them what they thought was the best solution, then helped them determine their course of action. A new and empowered team was born—one that made decisions, led initiatives, and felt ownership and passion for their work.

Dawn summed up her experience after the Integro leadership process: “Learning to lead by building trust and personal responsibility has truly changed the way I communicate with my team. It has left a positive imprint on my personal life as well as with the staff I interact with on a daily basis. I learned so many priceless lessons to take back and instill in my day-to-day interactions with my team. *I no*

longer light a fire under my staff, I light a fire in them, and it truly has made all the difference in the world. Rather than focus on managing people, I now operate by my personal mission statement: To create an environment where people can be their best.”

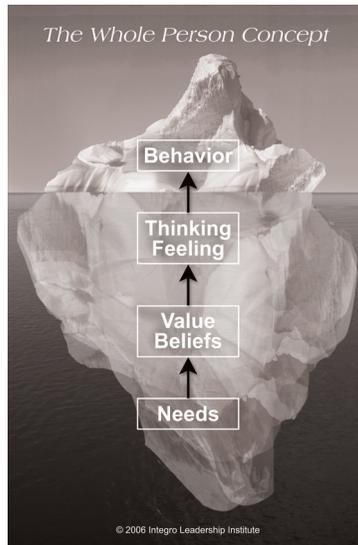
The results for Unity Health Center have been dramatic. With leadership focused on working with employees to fulfill their mission, staff vacancies decreased from a consistent forty to fifty positions three years ago to a negligible level. The impact on the organization’s ability to fulfill its purpose was very positive. And all of it was accomplished with the same core group of people.

So, what changed? *Leadership behavior*. The leadership team changed their focus from managing and controlling people to one of working in partnership with employees. They were presented with the challenge: “How can we better positively impact human life through exceptional healthcare?” The employees rose to the challenge and took responsibility for making the new mission statement real, and the results have been truly outstanding.

The Whole Person Concept

To create an environment like Dawn did at Unity Health, you need to assess your own leadership style and how it impacts the environment your team experiences. Are you even aware of how your team perceives your behavior? Everything you do at work impacts the environment you create. The best leaders can take a step back and look at themselves objectively. You must do that, too.

Have you ever noticed that wherever you go, there you are...all of you? This is not some existential question designed to confuse you. Take it literally. You know you cannot leave part of yourself at home when you go to work. You are a *whole person*. The **Whole Person Concept** is a simple way of understanding what you take with you everywhere you go and how others see you. I also refer to the **Whole Person Concept** as the *iceberg model*, because, as you can see in the graphic, people have a lot in common with an iceberg.



Scientists say only about one-seventh of the entire mass, just the tip of the iceberg, is obvious and visible above the waterline; the rest is beneath the surface. People are like that too.

There are four aspects to the **Whole Person Concept**: *behavior, thinking and feeling, values and beliefs, and needs.*

BEHAVIOR

It makes sense to start with the tip of the iceberg because that is what everybody else can see. When you meet people for the first time, all you can see is their *behavior*; you really don't know anything else about them. You only have their *behavior* by which to attempt to understand them and figure out how you want to relate to them. There is so much more to people than their *behavior*, so many aspects below the waterline that you can't see. I am sure you can think of people who are a mystery to you. You look at them and silently ask yourself, "*Why do they do that? That just doesn't make any sense to me.*"

They don't make sense to you because what's going on inside them is very different to what goes on inside you. So, if you are going to be a leader who creates an environment that ignites passion, you need to understand your *behavior*, and what is going on inside you that drives it. This will also help you understand how your *behavior* can be interpreted or misinterpreted by people who are different from you, who look at your *behavior* and say, "*Why does she do that? Why does he behave the way he does?*"

THINKING AND FEELING

Everything you do is done because you either *think* you should do it, or because you *feel* like you want to do it. The *thinking and feeling* aspect lies just below the waterline of the **Whole Person Concept**. In many ways, *thinking* and *feeling* are inseparable. When you *think* about something, you have *feelings* associated with that thought. When you *think* about something you love to do, hopefully your work, you *feel* energized and enthusiastic. But when you *think* about something you hate to do, hopefully not your work, you experience *feelings* of dread and desire to avoid doing it.

You also have *thoughts* about your *feelings*. When you are *feeling* angry with people, you are likely to be *thinking* about all the reasons why you should be angry with them, why they should not have done what they did. Or, you could be questioning your *feelings*: *Why am I getting so angry over something so insignificant?*

Even though they are so closely linked, *thinking* and *feeling* can come into conflict. Have you ever woken up and not *felt* like getting out of bed? That question is rhetorical; of course you have. What do you do? Do you hit the snooze button and go back to sleep because that is what you *feel* like doing, or do you drag yourself out of bed and get ready for work because you *think* you should? Hopefully, your *feelings* about facing the day change by the time you get to work. If not, then what does your employer or customer get from you? Someone who is going through the motions with no enthusiasm, no commitment, and certainly no passion!

At the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia, I was a sprinter and 220-yard hurdler on the track team. At training one night the week before the National Inter-Varsity Championships, I had absolutely zero motivation to train. I told my coach how I was *feeling*, and, being the wise coach that he was, he suggested I jog a few laps to warm up and then see how I *felt*. He was right! After a few laps and some short sprints, I really *felt* like training and had a great workout. The same idea probably holds true for you when you don't *feel* like going to the gym to work out. You *think* you should and, once you get there, most of the time you are glad you did it. Start doing what you know you should be doing and let your *feelings* catch up. But always be aware of how your *thinking* and *feeling* are affecting your behavior.

VALUES AND BELIEFS

We are more complex than merely our thinking, feeling, and behavior. Deeper motives stir within us: our *values* and *beliefs*. Like thinking and feeling, they are interconnected. A *value* is something you believe in, and it serves as a compass to how you think and feel. If you *value* honesty, then you no doubt have established

beliefs about what honesty is, what it means to you, and what you believe to be right or wrong. When someone does something wrong according to your standards of honesty, it impacts how you feel and think about that person, and maybe how you behave towards him or her as well.

The difference between a *belief* and a thought is that *beliefs* are thoughts that become fact to you. When you first hear something, you mull it over a bit then decide upon its validity as a truthful statement. You say, “*I agree with that. It’s a fact.*” Once you’ve made that decision, it is no longer just a thought, it is a *belief*. *Beliefs* are much deeper down in the iceberg than thoughts. They are more personal and exist closer to the core of your being. You make decisions based on your *beliefs* and *values* all the time without questioning them.

But *beliefs* are not always right. Perhaps the most glaring example of a false *belief* occurred in Europe just before the Renaissance when, until the publication of *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium* in 1530 by Nicolas Copernicus, people *believed* the earth was a fixed, immovable mass located at the center of the universe with the sun and stars revolving around it. Copernicus refuted this *belief*, citing astronomical and mathematical evidence that the earth revolved around the sun, but he did not publish his work at the time because it went against the philosophical and religious teaching of the time that mankind was the center of the universe.

After his death, two other Italian scientists, Galileo and Giordano Bruno, published work based on Copernican theory only to find that the Church was not ready to *believe* it. Bruno was burned at the stake in 1600 and Galileo imprisoned for life, albeit comfortably, in 1633. The world leaders at that time operated on *beliefs* that were false, but they were so convinced they were right that they rejected any and all alternate views. Of course, we now have scientific evidence that the sun is the center of our solar system, but the fact that people stubbornly held on to their *beliefs* for so long, even though they were false, shows how our *beliefs* can potentially stand in the way of progress.

What are your *beliefs* about what it takes to be a leader and achieve outstanding results? If some of your *beliefs* have actually prevented you from getting the best possible performance out of your team or organization, are you willing to question what you *believe* to be true? I’m not asking you to throw out your *beliefs*. What I am suggesting is that there is real value in being open-minded enough to question your *beliefs*. If you are right, you will be even more certain of it by being open to the idea of maybe being wrong. Differences in *values* and *beliefs* are the cause of so much unnecessary conflict in the world. It is very important to understand that if someone else’s beliefs vary from your own, it does not mean that person is wrong and you are right. It *may* be that you are right. It may be that you

are *both* right. But is it more important to be right, or to be effective as a leader?

To be an effective leader you must understand the **Whole Person Concept** if you hope to ignite people's passion. People are more passionate about something they believe in, so aligning their *personal values* with your *organizational values* is an important aspect of your leadership role.

NEEDS

At the bottom of the iceberg, at our core, are our *needs*. *Needs* are the most instinctive part of us. These are necessities like eating, drinking, and breathing that spring from something primal in us all. Eating is a good example of how our *needs* connect with our behavior, thinking and feeling, and values and beliefs. When we are hungry, we eat. Eating is the behavior that satisfies our *need*. Sometimes these *needs* are filtered by your beliefs and values before you act to satisfy them. When you're hungry, you don't necessarily grab the first edible thing in sight because you feel like it. You may think it is not good for you, so you temper your *need*, but the *need* to eat is there, nonetheless, and must be satisfied.

Some *needs* are more instinctive and go straight through from *needs* to feelings to behavior, skipping values and beliefs altogether. None of us is born with values and beliefs because the cognitive thinking part of the brain is not yet functional at that age; we have no language, only primal *needs*, feelings, and behavior. As babies, when our *needs* were satisfied, we felt happy, content with sleeping, playing, laughing, crawling around, and just being inquisitive. When our *needs* were not met, however, we were not satisfied and acted accordingly—in other words, we cried.

Unfortunately, some adults still operate in such a basic and primal way. They do not think about their actions, they merely react to their *needs* and feelings without having learned to manage their emotions. Yelling and screaming at people is inappropriate behavior in the workplace or, for that matter, anywhere. It accomplishes nothing positive in the long term, especially if the goal is to get employees to be more passionate, yet I hear stories all the time about managers who yell and scream to get employees to do what they say. Why? To regain control when they feel they are losing control. They are control freaks! Those who work with them will do just about anything to make sure they don't yell and scream again. So it works—in the short term. People who scream at other people are a liability to the organization, no matter what they are producing.

Two Sources of Motivation

We will revisit this **Whole Person Concept** frequently throughout the book because it is a critical foundational model for being an effective leader. But first, you need to understand your own behavior and its two sources of motivation.

Needs Motivation is doing what makes you happy, makes you money, gets you recognition, gets you affection, earns you respect, or achieves results. It is the *get* part of the **Give-Get Cycle**. Unsatisfied needs create compulsive behavior, driving you to meet that need at all costs. The only way you can satisfy your own needs is through your own behavior, even if that need is going to be satisfied by someone else. For example, we all need affection from time to time. The way to *get* this need satisfied is not by sitting around, waiting for someone to *give* it to you. You meet the need by *giving to get*, by doing something that will *get* someone else to *give* you affection. This applies to any need you have. You have to *give* something to *get* the need satisfied.

Values Motivation is doing what you believe you should do, what you believe is right, and what you believe is appropriate. It may not suit your short-term needs at the time—as we saw with Dawn’s reaction to having to focus on leadership and staff development that took her away from performing other duties at the hospital—but it will serve you in the long haul. It is not uncommon to have some internal conflict between needs and values.

Because your behavior creates the environment your team works in, you need to understand what your *needs* and *values* are, how they influence your *thinking* and *feeling*, and ultimately your *behavior*. If you want your team to be passionate about their work and give their best every day, then you must start with your own *behavior*. The next two chapters focus on the impact your behavior as a leader has on your team members’ willingness to be accountable and the level of trust in your team. Then we will go below the waterline to understand the needs and values of your team members to find out what ignites their passion.

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