Creating Sustainable Performance

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About me

• Wen Chang, Ph.D., CHE
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• Research Interest
  – Employee motivation and retention
  – Positive psychology
    • Psychological contract
    • Thriving
  – Hospitality education
Employee happiness?

- Happy employees
- Show up on-time
- Commitment
- Productivity
- Citizenship behaviors

Sustainable Individuals & organizational performance
Engagement

A positive, fulfilling, affective-motivational state of work related well-being & the antipode of job burnout. *Or*

The relationship of an employee with his or her work

- **Vigor**
  
  High level of energy and mental resilience while working

- **Dedication**
  
  Strong involvement in one’s work; pride and significance

- **Absorption**
  
  Being fully engrossed in one’s work
12 ways to self-check engagement

**Gallup’s Q**\(^{12}\) **survey**

- I know what is expected of me at work. (*role clarity*)
- I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right. (*material resources*)
- At work, I have the opportunity to do what I do best every day. (*opportunity for skill development*)
- In the past seven days, I have received recognition or praise for good work. (*social support, positive feedback*)
- My supervisor, or someone at work, seems to care about me as a person. (*supervisor support*)
12 ways to self-check engagement

• There is someone at work who encourages my development. *(coaching)*
• At work, my opinions seem to count. *(voice)*
• The mission or purpose of my company makes me feel my job is important. *(meaningfulness)*
• My associates or fellow employees are committed to doing quality work. *(quality culture)*
• I have a best friend at work. *(social support)*
• In the past six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress. *(feedback)*
• In the past year, I have had opportunities at work to learn and grow. *(learning opportunities)*
The sense of being alive, passionate, and excited

The growth comes from gaining new knowledge and skills

A sense of progress or forward movement in one’s self development
Engagement is more focused on performance in the present state while thriving is more improvement-focused.
Attention!

• The two components of thriving must both present.

• One without the other is unlikely to be sustainable and may even damage performance.

• The combination of the two components leads to employees who deliver results and find ways to grow.
Empirical studies on thriving

- Thriving employees demonstrated 16% better overall performance and 125% less burnout. They were 32% more committed to the organization and 46% more satisfied with their jobs.

- Thriving positively associates with employee career satisfaction and intention to stay.
Empirical studies on thriving cont.

• People who were with higher energy and high learning were 21% more effective as leaders than those who were only high energy.

• Leaders’ characteristics such as transparency and ethics magnifies the relationship between employee perceived contract fulfillment and career satisfaction through thriving, especially through vitality.
Creates a thriving environment

The four mechanisms

- Providing decision-making discretion
- Sharing information
- Minimizing incivility
- Offering performance feedback
Provide decision-making discretion

- Employees at every level are encouraged by the ability to make decisions that affect their work (autonomy).
- Empowerment of leaders/managers gives employee a greater sense of control.
- Managers should avoid cutting back empowerment because of mistakes.
- Examples from industries
  - Alaska Airline
  - Southwest Airline
  - Facebook
Sharing information

(Transparency)

Employees contribute more effectively when they understand how their work fits with the organization’s mission and strategy.

**Alaska Airlines**
Using road show/training classes to help employees share ideas. Employee pride rate went up to 90%.

**Zingerman’s business**
Instituting open book policy to increase employee’s sense of ownership and performance.

**Zingerman’s business/ Whole food/ YRC Worldwide**
Adopting open book management.
Minimizing incivility

- Uncivil behaviors at work
- Incivility prevents people from thriving
- Employees are likely to narrow their focus to avoid risks and lose the chances to learn.
- If you hire for civility, you’re more like to breed it into your culture.

**Caiman Consulting, Washington**

Caiman Consulting checked employee’s background of civility in its hiring process, which result high retention rate.
Offering performance feedback

- Feedback creates opportunities to learn and energy.
- By resolving feelings of uncertainty, feedback keeps people’s work-related activities focused on personal and organizational goals.

- Examples:
  - Quicken Loads – Near-real-time information sharing (Kanban Board)
  - O’Melveny & Myers – 360-degree evaluation
Individual strategies for thriving

- Take a break
- Craft your own work to be more meaningful
- Look for opportunities to innovate and learn. Break out of the status quo
- Invest in relationships that energize you
- Recognize that thriving can spill over outside the office
Summary

• Do not focus on engagement only, be engaged and thriving at the same time

• Each of the four mechanism provides a different angle for thriving.

• Learn to self-check your thriving level at work, use the individual strategies to restore thriving as needed.
Thank You!

Questions?

Comments?

Suggestions?
Major references


• Chang, W., & Busser, J. (forthcoming). The moderating effects of authentic leadership on hospitality employees career satisfaction through thriving.


• Gallup.com