Chapter 7
Applying the Full Range of Leadership: Developing Followers and Employee Engagement in the Workplace

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ABSTRACT
Engaged employees are connected, present, authentically self-expressive in their work roles, and committed to their organizations. Disengaged employees are disconnected and detached from their work. The extent to which employees are engaged is malleable and subject to influence and change; therefore, employee engagement can be developed. When employees believe they are supported with opportunities for growth and development, they are more likely to be engaged in their work. In this chapter, employee engagement, employee development, and full range leadership are discussed along with how leaders use transactional, transformational, and laissez-faire leadership to develop followers and encourage employee engagement.

INTRODUCTION
There is an epidemic within today’s contemporary organizations, which has been referred to as employee disengagement (Swindall, 2010). Disengagement at work is a coping mechanism that employees use when they perceive a lack of support from coworkers and supervisors (Thanacoody, Newman, & Fuchs, 2014). It has been reported that more and more workers are actively disengaged and afraid to speak up regarding policies, procedures, or business practices out of fear of negative consequences such as retribution (Maylett & Warner, 2014; Wilson, 2014). When employees are disengaged, they alienate themselves from their work, safeguard themselves, and suppress their thoughts and feelings resulting in
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health and wellness issues, intention to quit, high turnover rates, reduced productivity, and lower moral (Anuradha, Lakshmi, & Ghuman, 2017; Blauner, 1964; Seeman, 1972; Lencioni, 2007).

Today’s organizational leaders sometimes make short-term decisions to keep pace with the changing demands of the marketplace but end up violating the psychological contract and creating an environment where employees experience less job security, uncertainty in career opportunities, and challenging organizational climates (Imperatori, 2017). These working conditions take a toll on employees and ultimately diminish the effectiveness of the organization. While some workers resign and leave the organization, others stay employed but mentally quit and emotionally detach. Going to work everyday for the paycheck becomes a way of life. According to the Gallup Organization (as cited by Swindall, 2007), people without passion for their work make up 55% of the people in organizations and those actively disengaged make up 19% with only 26% of employees who are actively engaged.

When employees lose their motivation and enthusiasm on the job, it can be easy for leaders to simply blame employees for poor attitudes and expect workers to turn things around for themselves. Yet, organizational leaders are the ones responsible for the culture and climate of the organization, and signs of disengagement need to be addressed through effective leadership. Ignoring disengaged employees can do quite a bit of damage as the employees who are engaged can become weary when working with peers who lack passion for their work. Leaders need to gain insights on how to keep the entire workforce motivated and engaged on an ongoing basis.

It is possible for employees who are engaged to become disengaged and visa versa. Employee engagement is malleable and state-like, making it subject to influence, change, and development, and by its nature, is cognitive and affective. For example, people are more likely to be engaged when they perceive they are supported and when they experience positive emotions (Biswas & Bhatnagar, 2013; Fredrickson, 2009; Youssef-Morgan, & Bockorny, 2014). Since employee engagement is not fixed and subject to change, many leaders view employee engagement initiatives as a strategic employee development opportunity that can improve employee performance and enhance overall effectiveness of their organizations.

Employee engagement is a powerful antecedent to a variety of positive employee attitudes and behaviors such as organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behaviors (Whittington, Meskelis, Asare, & Beldona, 2017). Employee engagement is also associated with effective employee performance, retention, productivity, and overall business growth (Yadav, 2016). Given the desirability of these outcomes, organizational practitioners are interested in knowing how to help individual employees overcome any potential barriers to making positive changes as well as how employee engagement can be collectively nurtured within organizations (Herman, 2014).

One of the ways that leaders can encourage the development of employee engagement is through the use of leadership styles appropriate to the needs of employees. While there are many different ways of defining and describing leadership, the leadership theory that is being examined in this chapter is referred to as full range leadership. Full range leadership is a comprehensive framework of leadership that includes transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership (Antonakis, Avolio, Sivasubramaniam, 2003; Avolio & Bass, 2004; Kanste, Kääriäinen, & Kyngäs, 2009). In the full range leadership model, transformational leadership is enacted through the use of idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Transactional leadership depends on contingent rewards and management by exception whereas the laissez-faire leadership style is the avoidance of leadership (Avolio & Bass, 2002).
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