

# *PASSIONATE* PERFORMANCE

**Engaging Minds and Hearts  
to Conquer the Competition**

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## **Dedication**

To my wife and partner in life, Julie,  
who provides the greatest example  
of engaging the minds and hearts  
of a team – our family.

## **en·gage**

\in-'gāj\ verb

to attract and hold interest;  
to cause to participate;  
to connect or interlock with.

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# INTRODUCTION

In today's hyper-competitive market, a burning question for most companies is this: "How can we achieve a *significant* and *sustainable* competitive advantage in order to retain our customers?" After all, keeping existing customers is five times less expensive than finding new ones. That's good business in anyone's book.

Traditional competitive factors like product design, technology and distribution channels are harder to sustain in a super-fast, mega-networked world. In fact, the good old "Four P's of Marketing" – product, price, promotion and placement – are having much less impact for companies competing in today's marketplace.

A fifth "P" – *people* – has become an increasingly important competitive factor. Consider this: About 70% of customers' buying decisions are based on positive human interactions with sales staff. Add to this the fact that 83% of the U.S. gross domestic product comes from services and information which are created and delivered by people. **The bottom line is that people buy from people, not companies.** So, your people – and the performance they deliver – are the defining competitive advantage for your organization.

When people are engaged in their work and feel a deep connection to it, they deliver Passionate Performance. Passionate Performance creates satisfied customers, and ultimately, value for the organization. Think of the times you've gone shopping or to a restaurant and dealt with service people who were visibly excited to be in their jobs and to be serving you. Their words jumped out of their hearts rather than being regurgitated from a script. They probably surprised you with the extra effort and thoughtfulness they put toward satisfying your particular needs or questions – and they actually seemed happy to do it!

Now, consider how you felt when you left these establishments. Did you buy more than you had planned? Were you likely to return? Did you recommend these businesses to friends? You probably answered “Yes” to at least one of these questions. That's the beginning of a value chain that starts with engaged employees.

Some people are naturally engaged in their work and consistently deliver Passionate Performance. The most effective leaders learn how to bring these qualities out in everyone. They invest time, energy and resources to engage their people because engaged employees are more likely to:

- ◆ stay with the organization;
- ◆ perform at higher levels;
- ◆ influence others to perform well;
- ◆ promote the organization externally; and
- ◆ deliver unparalleled customer service.

When you discover how to actively engage your people to deliver Passionate Performance, you start a powerful and self-reinforcing cycle that builds value for your organization. This creates a *unique, sustainable* competitive advantage. Given enough time and resources, your competitors can replicate your products, distribution channels and technology. However, Passionate Performance cannot be easily duplicated by your competition and creates a rock-solid wall of differentiation between you and the rest of the pack.

This book offers practical strategies to help you engage your employees – their minds *and* hearts. Using these strategies will create a precious and powerful competitive advantage for your organization.

I hope these pages inspire *your* mind and heart with ideas that help you evoke Passionate Performance from your team.

Read, enjoy and engage!



“If your company is going to put customers first, then you must put employees *more* first.”

– Tom Peters  
Management Consultant  
and Author

THE **ANATOMY** OF  
**PASSIONATE**  
**PERFORMANCE**

# THE ANATOMY OF PASSIONATE PERFORMANCE



## **Passionate Performance**

Passionate Performance is achieved when employees are fully engaged – when they demonstrate a **strong, sustained intellectual and emotional attachment to their work.**

You will know when employees are demonstrating Passionate Performance because you will feel the enthusiasm and see the results. Your team will have more fun creating better outcomes. They will be fully present at work, in the moment, in the flow. They will perform at higher levels and be motivated to do more. They will feel like kids again – a time when they had fun doing their very best at whatever they were engaged in. In short, **their work will feel like play.**

Can you remember a situation where you felt like this? Maybe it was a special project where everything came together perfectly. Or a team you were on where everyone did what was best for the team, creating a rare synergy. Or a certain cause you volunteered for where you felt like the best of your skills and talents flowed naturally to make a real difference. Most of us can remember a situation like this because it was such a unique experience and left us with such a special feeling. It may have been a lot of work, but we most frequently describe it as “fun.” That’s because our minds and hearts were fully engaged.

What does Passionate Performance look like? How will you know when your employees are giving it? Look for signs of the big payoff from Passionate Performance: *discretionary effort* – people *choosing* to do more for you. You'll know your employees are giving discretionary effort when they:

- ◆ choose to work late to complete a project;
- ◆ ask how they can better serve another team member or department;
- ◆ inquire about how their actions affect another function or the customer;
- ◆ make a connection between their decisions and the company's financial results;
- ◆ treat company resources like their own;
- ◆ initiate improvements in work methods;
- ◆ look beyond their own roles for improvement opportunities; and
- ◆ pursue self-development on their own time.

You might think the instances of employees giving Passionate Performance will be few and far between, *but they don't have to be*. You can learn how to orchestrate Passionate Performance every day.

A Gallup poll revealed that only 26% of U.S. employees are *fully engaged* at any time.

On the other end of the spectrum, 19% of employees are *actively disengaged*, meaning they intentionally act in ways that negatively impact their organizations.

The annual cost nationwide to employ this actively disengaged group exceeds \$300 billion.

Source: *Gallup Management Journal*, March 2001

## The Engagement Challenge

As the research highlighted on the prior page indicates, most employees are not engaged at work – their bodies may be there, but their minds and hearts are not. In fact, 74% of employees are either indifferent to their work or actively disengaged.

Just think of the last time you had to deal with service representatives who made it clear they had something better to do than serve you. Unfortunately, most of us don't have to think much farther back than last week to recall such an interaction.

Are disengaged employees a problem in *your* organization? Do your employees complete only what is asked of them and nothing more? Did you know that actively disengaged employees miss an average of 3.5 more days of work per year than engaged employees?

Consider some other effects of disengagement:

- ◆ increased turnover;
- ◆ missed deadlines;
- ◆ low morale;
- ◆ high burnout rates;
- ◆ complacency;
- ◆ finger-pointing; and
- ◆ lack of accountability and responsibility.

Do you recognize any of these? If you answered “Yes,” that’s an indication you have an engagement challenge.

Some disengaged employees will choose to leave your team. Even worse, others will stay on the job, just put in time and be destructive. An employee who quits no longer affects your organization; an actively disengaged employee who stays has a toxic effect on your team and your customers.

Does disengagement look like a pretty bleak picture for leaders? Not at all! **Disengagement is simply the result of unfulfilled needs.** Nothing fancy here; these are basic human needs that leaders either forget to, choose not to, or simply don't know how to fulfill.

The good news is that it doesn't cost a dime to engage employees, *and* the strategies you need to engage your team are simple. Even better, the answers and tools are actually right here at your fingertips. So, let's look at what you can do to win this engagement challenge.

## **Engaging Minds and Hearts**

Management guru Peter Drucker advises leaders to, "Accept the fact that we have to treat almost anybody as a volunteer." *Employees as volunteers* is a useful concept to remind leaders that they must continually engage their people. Only fully engaged employees will give you the discretionary effort required for Passionate Performance. In the era of the volunteer worker, leaders must engage their employees to elicit discretionary effort from them. It may sound like pretty heady and heart-wrenching stuff to fully engage your employees, but there are simple strategies you can use in your pursuit of Passionate Performance.

The solution to the engagement challenge is found within the minds and hearts of employees where basic human needs are fulfilled. It's a simple but powerful formula: **When my needs are fulfilled, I am engaged and I perform at my peak ability.** When my needs are met, I'm motivated to help those who meet my needs. When my needs are *not* met, I'm frustrated, out of control, unfocused, and disconnected – in a word, disengaged.

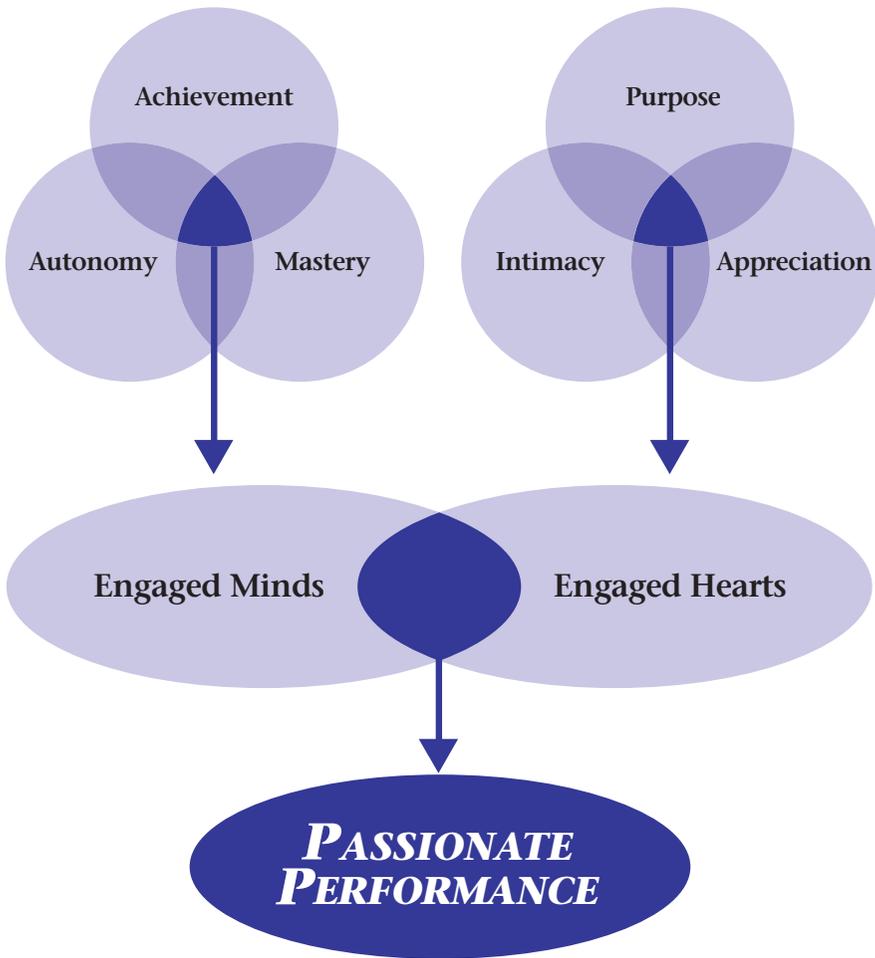
We all have these basic human needs, and they have remained the same amidst the tornado of external change. Times have changed, and our world has certainly changed, but people have not. In

many organizations today, these basic needs still go unfulfilled. It's up to you as the leader to fulfill them.

To meet these needs, leaders must first see them and acknowledge them. In order to see them, leaders must view their employees as people and not just workers. If you look at your employees as people, you can identify these six basic needs – three intellectual and three emotional:

Intellectual Needs	Emotional Needs
◆ Achievement	◆ Purpose
◆ Autonomy	◆ Intimacy
◆ Mastery	◆ Appreciation

These needs are interdependent. For example, to engage the minds of your employees, you must fulfill *all three* intellectual needs: achievement, autonomy and mastery. The same holds true for the emotional needs. Therefore, achieving Passionate Performance is a two-sided challenge: intellectual *and* emotional. Successful leaders engage both the minds and hearts of their people.



When it comes to Passionate Performance, the mind and the heart go hand in hand. **Engaged minds build your employees' performance and engaged hearts build their passion.** Performance without passion tends to falter during tough times or in the face of challenges that require sacrifice, significant extra effort or unusually creative solutions. On the other hand, passion without performance results in diffused, unfocused efforts.

A close look at great companies reveals a common theme: They have leaders who engage the minds and hearts of their employees and therefore are able to evoke Passionate Performance from their teams. For example, at high-tech giant Agilent, leaders throughout the organization work hard at engaging employees and helping them create strong intellectual and emotional attachments to work. During an economic downturn, the company was forced to eliminate over 8,000 jobs. Because leaders had developed an engaged workforce, they found many laid-off employees working until 10:00 p.m. on their last day just to leave things in good order. Now that's Passionate Performance, and it can shine a light for your organization even during dark times.

How would you like to be able to elicit Passionate Performance from your employees every day? You can if you will take the steps to satisfy their needs. The remaining chapters describe each need and practical strategies you can use to fulfill each one. Although the engagement strategies are simple, make no bones about it – they require lots of hard work. The results will be well worth your effort. Meeting employees' needs builds the foundation for Passionate Performance. When you fulfill their needs, your employees will create a powerful competitive advantage for your organization – guaranteed!



Our newest competitive  
advantage is our oldest one –  
our employees'  
minds and hearts.

*“I always felt that my  
greatest asset was not  
my physical ability; it  
was my mental ability.”*

– Bruce Jenner  
Gold Medal Olympic Decathlete