

# SEVEN STEPS FOR CREATING BEHAVIOUR AND PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS THAT DRIVE EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

BY BILL HOGG

*This is the fifth in our series of articles that looks at Building a High Performance Work Environment. The full series will be available for download as a white paper once it is completed.*

In the previous article we discussed the [four core areas of leadership focus in high performance environments](#). This article will look at the seven steps that are needed to create behaviour and performance expectations that are necessary in a high performance environment.

There is very little difference between most companies that compete in the same industry. In your strategy to achieve the highest percentage of the market you need to create differentiating factors that your competitors cannot match.

**FEW COMPANIES WILL EVER ENJOY A LONG TERM PRODUCT OR PRICE ADVANTAGE AGAIN -- THEY CAN BE EASILY DUPLICATED. BUT THE STRENGTH OF YOUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS, BUILT ON A STRONG CUSTOMER SERVICE FOUNDATION CAN NEVER BE DUPLICATED OR LURED AWAY.**

While most companies focus on tangible differentiators such as price, speed, delivery, and convenience, these are all things that your competitors can match. As an effective leader, you need to create an intangible differentiator that cannot be matched by your competition -- and that is your people and your culture

A high level of employee engagement ([see 8 Emotional Drivers of Employee Engagement](#)) and achieving desired behaviours is something that companies often fail to achieve. These failures lead to a lower level of performance by your team -- and missed performance milestones have an impact on your company's ability to deliver what you have promised to your customers -- creating a situation where customer experience will suffer as well.

Your ability to engage people will help you meet your corporate goals. And, you will be in a stronger position to exceed what you have promised and communicated to your customers.

## 7 Steps for creating a high performance work environment

As a leader you are responsible to develop the company culture and work environment. Here are 7 steps you can follow to increase performance in your organization:

1. **Identify values that guide your business:** What are the core values that you want your business to be guided by? Is it collaboration? Openness? A team approach? Respect? Understand your values and communicate them to your team to set the tone for individual behaviour.
2. **Set clear and concise expectations:** You need to set the bar high if you expect high performance. Make it clear, through regular communication, what is expected and how you expect things to get done. The clearer you are on what is expected, the easier it will be for people to follow through and execute.

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3. **Expect accountability:** Accountability is vital. What are the repercussions for missed performance targets? Holding people accountable for their actions will help ensure that the team performs at the level established for them.
4. **Build a culture of trust:** People need to trust that their leaders and colleagues will do as they say. When people demonstrate trust they need to be rewarded with more responsibility and autonomy in order for them to grow within the company. Conversely, your team needs to believe that when they prove they are trustworthy they will be rewarded accordingly.
5. **Manage the Conversation:** Be consistently positive and define exactly what the desired experience/culture you want to achieve is for your organization. This is accomplished through regular discussion and conversations -- not special meetings. Leaders need to build ongoing dialogues with their team about culture. For this to work it cannot be a specific initiative, but rather part of daily conversations that builds over time.
6. **Monitor outcomes:** If you want to achieve a high level of performance then you need to measure it. This could be in the form of sales targets, customer satisfaction, new customers, or anything that makes sense for your business. Think about what you need your team to accomplish to achieve desired results and then measure what will drive your business.
7. **Establish an intentional process to review/revise/reward behaviours:** Create an internal process for how you will provide ongoing input with your team. How do you plan to review their performance? How are adjustments made? How are you going to reward desired behaviour? There needs to be both formal and informal process in place. A yearly review is seldom effective, especially when attempting to engage and shape behaviour internally.

These steps will help you to better frame a high performance environment for your company and determine actions that you can take to achieve a high standard for performance.

See the full set of articles in our High Performance Work Environment series by visiting [www.BillHogg.ca/resources/articles/](http://www.BillHogg.ca/resources/articles/).

## **Transformational Leadership Expert | Professional Speaker | Performance Excelsior™**

*Bill is the "just do it" guy who has walked in your shoes. Senior leaders at organizations like Anheuser-Busch InBev, The Bay, Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, Pita Pit, RBH, State Farm Insurance, Toronto International Film Festival and ServiceOntario hire Bill to navigate change and influence and inspire higher performing teams that deliver exceptional customer service, higher productivity and improve profits.*

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