

# **Throwing Employee Engagement Into Overdrive - IO**



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# IO Blog



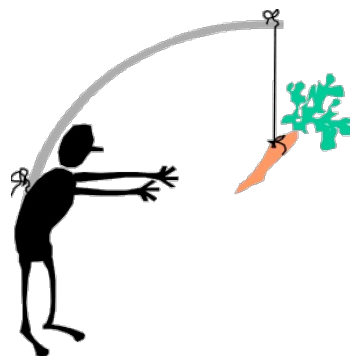
## Throwing Employee Engagement Into Overdrive

July 29th, 2013 / Keith Carnes / 0 comments

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*This is part 1 in a 4 part series that will discuss some of the underpinnings that can lead to the creation and sustainability of high employee engagement.*

Over my career I have coached a large number of teams and leaders on the concepts of high performance and high engagement, and in most of those cases I found situations that closely reflected many of the ideas that business author Daniel Pink wrote about in his book "Drive" (and were subsequently included in his **TedTalk**). The thrust of Pink's book is really that, what most businesses think motivates employees isn't necessarily correct, and that there are other prime motivators that need to be considered in order to achieve high employee engagement in the workplace. Over the years, my experiences tend to validate Pink's belief that what drives employees to be fully committed to the "cause" is very different than the traditional conventional wisdom on the topic.



**Motivators Matter!! Identify Them Correctly**

A large number of companies continue to believe that employees are motivated by traditional workplace “sticks and carrots” such as money (compensation) and titles (promotions). I’ll be the first to admit that making sure that you can pay the bills and care for your family is a core foundational tenet that is important to every single employee (look no further than **Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs** to confirm). But once you get past that point, other motivators kick in. Yes, things like compensation do certainly matter, but as Pink’s research points out, it’s **not** what creates an environment of highly engaged employees. He suggests that individuals are primarily motivated by three things: **Autonomy, Mastery, and Purpose**.

Let’s quickly define each:

- **Autonomy** is the ability for an employee to influence and control how they manage their time, tasks, and interactions with other employees.
- **Mastery** is the opportunity for an employee to become a true expert in the area in which they work.
- **Purpose** is the connection that an employee can form with a larger objective that is bigger than their day-to-day work.

Creating high levels of employee engagement can be much easier when remembering that autonomy, mastery, and purpose are prime motivators.

*Keith Carnes, MHRM, is Senior Training and Development Program Designer at IO. He has managed the culture and designed workforce development inside Home Depot, Apollo Group, and Intel.*

Tags: autonomy, employee engagement, Keith Carnes, mastery, purpose, TEDTalks

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