



HRXaminer

*Examining practical HR issues business owners
and managers encounter every day*

HR and the Economy

June 2009

HR
SpecialTopics:
A New Era of
Employee
Engagement

I'll be co-presenting this seminar with **Keith Friede of Gallagher Benefit Services** on **August 18, 2009 from 8:00 am – 9:30 am**. You don't want to miss this engaging session on employee engagement. Here's our program description:

Minnesota Society of Certified Public Accountants

This is the second consecutive year that MNCPA has requested I write an article for their *Footnote* publication. While this year's article is not quite as "fun" as last year's article on *Managing the Employee Life Cycle™*, it sheds light on the issues facing many organizations today.

[Link to ELC 2008](#)

Those of you who are making major business decisions based on a new economic model and are revising your staffing levels, as well as those who are considering organizational development options after having made some staffing changes, should find my new article informative and beneficial.

[Link to 2009](#)



As an HR professional or top manager, you know that organizations cannot succeed without committed, engaged employees. But in this challenging time when the economy is tight, budgets are cut, and change and uncertainty abound, the engagement you must promote is being challenged like never before.

So what's an HR professional to do? This is actually a great opportunity to take the challenge head-on and bring renewal to our workplaces by creating a positive, focused work culture that is stronger and more engaged than ever before.

In this 90-minute session, we will first examine the concepts of employee engagement. But more importantly, together we will discover how to promote greater employee engagement in our organizations in these unique times.

As I compare my 2009 and 2008 articles, the new article incorporates several of the phases of the Employee Life Cycle. While much of it addresses the "Transition" phase – strategizing and planning whether or how to reduce or realign the expense of having employees and how to exit employees smoothly from the organization, it also takes the core of the ELC into consideration:

1. the culture we're creating in our organizations,
2. how important it is to build and rebuild our organizations based on our mission, and
3. how to integrate our employee communication and motivation with our organization objectives.

No matter whether your organization is realigning or soaring, the key is to make sure you and your management team are looking at all sides of every equation when making these serious changes. Nothing is simple.

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Employee Engagement

When we change our organizational structure, teams, job responsibilities, and the other ways we do business, we need to step back and take the time to focus on how these changes really impact our employees. There's so much room for negative emotions and fear after organizational cutbacks. These negative reactions need to be as short-lived as possible.

It's our responsibility to ensure that we do whatever it takes to re-engage our employees. It is vital that we retain our trained, capable employees in order to get the productivity and results to keep our organizations strong.

Don't come expecting to be handed a list of quick, "sure-fire" remedies – that's an unfulfillable wish. But if you're ready to roll up your sleeves and work together with other professionals, to be creative, to break some new ground, and to collectively find new opportunities amid the challenges we face, then we hope you will join us for an exciting morning of learning, sharing and discovery.

We will each leave this session with a better understanding of employee engagement and a great start on our action plans of new ideas and strategies to engage and energize your employees.

Here's a link to register for the event!

[Register Now!](#)

Here are some thoughts on creating an Engaging Workplace:

1. Leaders from the top down must be actively committed to engagement practices.
2. Evaluate your team's overall level of engagement as well as each individual's engagement level
3. Evaluate your own level of engagement based on your behaviors
4. Make sure your walk matches your talk.
5. Assess how you communicate with your team – look at all aspects of your communic-actions (*yes, I made up the word*)
6. What demotivates you likely demotivates your team. Make a list of these items and take prompt action to fix what's not working.
7. How many employees have you thanked or recognized today? Increase this number by a factor of 10.
8. Create formal and informal recognition programs that add fun and achieve the results you need.
9. Customize how you recognize each employee to match their unique motivational needs.
10. Celebrate success often and then more often.

There's so much to do, and it starts with you! Take the risk to focus on engagement solutions and watch the exciting results!

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About Arlene Vernon

Arlene Vernon, PHR, partners with small businesses as their Human Resource Xpert to create their HR systems and solve their HR problems.

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