



Are we there yet?

In my last blog we discussed the 3rd of four key action components of leading your team:

1. You know and completely understand what the team destination/goal is,
2. You clearly communicate that destination to your team,
3. **You solicit their input for how to get there**, and
4. You are a walking, breathing scoreboard!

Today let's tackle the 4th and final component – **You are a walking, breathing scoreboard!**



When I was Manager of Marketing Intelligence for a software company, every leader went through an annual 360° feedback process, which, by the way, is key if you have any hope of improving employee engagement.

One of the more important pieces of data I heard from my team is that, while I was skilled at providing direction, I was lacking when it came to letting them know what happened during and after the project or task was complete.

What I learned from that is twofold: (1) we all want to know where we stand in relation to each goal; and (2) we want to clearly understand the impact of our work.

Yes, we all *want* to know where we stand; Millennials *insist* on it. If your leadership style is, “I told you once you’re doing well. If it changes, I’ll let you know,” you likely have issues with your team’s productivity and ownership of their work.

We are a society deeply entrenched in keeping score, whether it’s in sports, competition-based reality shows, or political polls. Imagine watching a basketball game where they’ve changed the rules and, instead of revealing the score as the game unfolds, you don’t find out who won until the game is over! That’s what it feels like to your employees when you assign goals and don’t let them know the score as they forge ahead.

There is the argument that employees should know where they stand in relation to the goal. That might be possible if the goal remained fixed but you and I both understand that the goal/deliverables of nearly all projects are adapted as they move forward. If we forget to pass those changes along to those who are doing the work, they end up working toward a goal that no longer exists; they tend to become demotivated and less productive. This is one of the more compelling reasons for you to be a walking, breathing scoreboard, And even if the goal remains fixed and they do know where they stand, your employees want assurance that you agree with their assessment of where they stand in relation to the goal.

When employees know where they stand, they get more motivated. And here’s the interesting part: they get more motivated even if they find out they’re behind. If they’re on track, it feels good and they want to do more. When they know they’re behind, they become more determined to catch up. Could there be a better reason to keep them informed of the status?

Employee Engagement (and leaders are employees, too) is all about having opportunities every day to use your creativity. When you and your team know where you stand in relation to your goals you know where your creativity is most needed, you become more engaged as you apply it.

Silver Rose is an Employee Engagement Thought Leader who works with organizations to implement practical, proven and timesaving strategies for: (1) improving employee engagement, (2) increasing profitability, and (3) freeing leadership from the need to micro-manage.

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