



SILVER ROSE  
CHANGE YOUR FOCUS; ENGAGE YOUR TEAM

## How Corporate Liberation Can Move the Needle

In my continuing research on Employee Engagement, I run across some fascinating ideas. Today I want to talk about *corporate liberation*, a term that is new to me, although the concept is something I've been promoting for years.

Coined by two men, Brian Carney, author of **Leadership Without Ego; How to Stop Managing and Start Leading**, and Isaac Getz, professor of leadership and innovation at ESCP Europe Business School in Paris, France, the concept of *corporate liberation* has been around for more than half a century and its advocates believe it has been more than proven by real data about the results.



What is corporate liberation?

Getz outlined it in a March 14, 2017 ChangeBoard.com article: "The idea can be stated simply enough: A liberated company allows employees complete freedom and responsibility to take actions that they—not their managers—decide are best for their company's vision. That doesn't mean that these firms are unmanaged. On the contrary, the specific actions that we observed in close to one hundred liberated companies prove the opposite."

<https://www.changeboard.com/article-details/16075/what-is-corporate-liberation-/>

In a liberated organization, managers act as coaches and eschew the outdated technique of "command-and-control." A "kissing cousin" of the process I teach, Socratic Delegation, liberated managers use questions to explore what the workers think is the best approach and then empower them to take action.

Since the Law of Attraction dictates that you get more of what you focus on, then honoring the expertise of your team in these ways results in a growth of expertise. In a command-and-control environment, the emphasis is on the need for employees to be told what to do. The result is more and more people who don't bother to think for themselves because really, what's the point? Disengagement grows; profits do not.

You can well imagine what a difference it would make in Employee Engagement to work at a liberated corporation. Each individual would be much more attentive to their input and output because they would know it's up to them, not management, to get things done. Although the importance of workers has *always* been significant, because their value has not been acknowledged as strongly as it could, workers end up disengaged and profits drop. This is not a theory; it's been proven repeatedly.

Here is one success story, outlined by Carney and Getz, in their September 10, 2018 Harvard Business Review article, *Give Your Team the Freedom to Do the Work They Think Matters Most*:

*"Michelin, the global tire manufacturing giant—with 11, 400 employees—has also embarked on a corporate liberation campaign. In one of its German plants, teams self-direct most activities and managers have transitioned into the role of coaches without formal authority. Operators set their work schedules and their vacations, design and monitor their own performance indicators, do their own maintenance, and are consulted on the choice of new machinery. Michelin is a huge company in a relatively mature industry, but it has still managed to nearly double its free cash flow since 2015, to \$1.75 billion in 2017 compared to \$979 million in 2015. In 2018, Michelin was ranked the #1 America's Best Large Employer."*

<https://hbr.org/2018/09/give-your-team-the-freedom-to-do-the-work-they-think-matters-most>

To paraphrase from the movie *Field of Dreams*, if you liberate your team, they will grow—their engagement AND your profits.