



Disengaged People

By Guy Arnold

How does it happen?

When people start a new job, or career, or even start a new business, they are committed, enthusiastic and optimistic: but, this starts to wear away from day one when things just don't happen like they want them to.

Unfortunately, many people have been brought up in the industrial mindset which is based on a command and control culture and when things don't go as they want them to, they start to try and manipulate and force them to go right.

People get cajoled, carrot and sticked, and commanded and controlled.

The net result of all of this is that **people get fed up, disengaged and disenfranchised.**

When you put on top of this the fact that:

- the majority of people aren't clear on what the top goals of their Organisation are, and
- if they are clear on them they don't know how their job relates to them
- or what they need to do to move forward,

then it's hardly any surprise that people feel disengaged both in their jobs and in their businesses!

This is of course **completely normal** and we see it every day and I'm sure that the majority of readers of this book have experienced it in one form or another.

So what is the answer?

Well, as usual the best answer is counter intuitive: **you should not force your people to do anything**, nor can you cajole them: command and control only gets things done while you are commanding and controlling it. (And what will happen when you're not there or not watching?)

This means that your business will be inefficient and unable to compete over the long-term in a global market. It also stifles innovation and creativity.

The best way to deal with this is to **start with your mission.**

Make sure it is absolutely clear and driven from fundamental principles: we would call this a **customer focused mission**: it should be aligned to promote what will drive external customers towards you, and **also focused on your internal customer, so your people feel aligned and empowered and enthused by what you do**: this will attract the sort of people to you who want to make your business a success and will repel the sort of people who don't want to.

The second step is to make sure all of your processes are aligned to your **customers' real needs.**

In this case we are talking about the internal customer. The internal customer needs to trust you and needs to feel appreciated and needs to feel like you care: you need to make sure that all of your processes are aligned to these needs.

You need processes that

- encourage feedback,
- build trust and transparency
- share mistakes and successes openly
- aim to make your people's lives as easy and rewarding as possible (as long as they do their part)

- make them feel genuinely valued and appreciated
- hold people accountable to excellence,
- reward for excellence,
- hold people accountable for bad performance,
- and take affective, fair, consistent action in success and failure.

Without all of these types of processes in your business, your people will be disengaged at best and maliciously obedient at worst.

The third thing is to continually improve inch by inch, **the extra inch.**

- Always give your people slightly better terms and conditions than they were expecting. Always give them a little bit of extra time off, or a little bit of extra bonus than they were anticipating: (and in return, expect extra inches from them!).
- And with all of your processes always move them forward systematically inch by inch for continual excellence and continual improvement.

Lastly, you must **Measure**: make sure that you have some **simple, clear measures aligned with your customer focused mission and your customers' real needs** and that everyone has a clear view of the score board.

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*Everyone's roles and goals must have a direct link to the overall goal and score of the business and everyone needs to be clear, through periodic reviews, feedback, and what we call **clear line of sight**, to make sure they are aware of what they can do to improve and have the resources, or the ability to find the resources, to hand.*

About the Author

Guy Arnold is a Self-employed business adviser and coach, delivering business support across the UK: specialising in:

- Building sales via consistent delivery of outstanding customer experiences
- Personal and Organisational effectiveness
- Empowering and motivating teams he is a flexible, independent, constructive, and diligent person, known for his focused & positive approach to issues, and thrives by helping others get the best out of themselves.

Guy's two main business interests:

1. His own training and consultancy Company, specializing in organizational and personal effectiveness, leadership, customer service, sales and time management: either working independently, or in conjunction with Franklin Covey Europe.
2. Authoring & publishing material on building sales through service in the customer empowered social media world: following 4 years research into 1 question: 'If GREAT customer service is blindingly obvious common sense, why isn't it common practice?'

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Direct Marketing Checklist

[From the Information Commissioner's Office]

The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) says that businesses can use the following checklist to help make sure their marketing messages comply with the law and don't annoy customers. It also includes an at-a-glance guide to the different rules on marketing calls, texts, emails, faxes and mail. It is primarily aimed at small businesses. For detailed advice, see the ICO's full guidance on direct marketing at:

http://www.ico.org.uk/for_organisations/guidance_index/~media/documents/library/Privacy_and_electronic/Practical_application/direct-marketing-guidance.pdf

Obtaining consent for marketing (tick where appropriate)

- We use opt-in boxes
- We specify methods of communication (eg by email, by text, by phone, by recorded call, by post)
- We ask for consent to pass details to third parties for marketing, and name or describe those third parties
- We record when and how we got consent, and exactly what it covers

Using bought-in lists (tick where appropriate)

- We check the origin and accuracy of the list
- We check when and how consent was obtained, and what it covers
- We don't use bought-in lists for texts, emails or recorded calls (unless we have proof of opt-in consent within last 6 months which specifically named or described us)
- We screen against the TPS
- We tell people where we got their details

Making calls (tick where appropriate)

- We screen live calls against the Telephone Preference Service (TPS)
- We only make recorded calls with opt-in consent
- We keep our own do-not-call list of anyone who says they don't want our calls
- We screen against our do-not-call list

Sending texts or emails (tick where appropriate)

- We only text or email with opt-in consent (unless contacting previous customers about our own similar products, and we offered them an opt-out when they gave their details)
- We offer an opt-out (by reply or unsubscribe link)
- We keep a list of anyone who opts out
- We screen against our opt-out list

