

# Keys to Engagement Series

ENGAGED  
PURPOSE

ENGAGED  
OWNERSHIP

ENGAGED  
LEADERS

ENGAGED  
EMPLOYEES

ENGAGED  
CUSTOMERS

ENGAGED  
ORGANISATION

## ENGAGED OWNERSHIP



### GUIDE

**This Guide will help you understand who an Engaged Owner is,** why becoming one is vital, how to avoid some common mistakes, and will provide you with step-by-step instructions for becoming one.

## You – the Chief Engagement Officer.

We've redefined *CEO* as someone who is passionate about engagement as an ongoing, evolving, multiplying process, and the key to creating an Engaged Organisation. He or she is accessible and alert, relentlessly involved, and part of the fabric of the organisation. Engagement starts with you.

## Who is an Engaged Owner?

When great things happen, Engaged Owners don't lock the door and pop the bubbly. They celebrate success with their teams. When things go wrong, they accept responsibility instead of looking for scapegoats. They look to learn from all situations.

Engaged Owners strive to create a culture of open communication that's rich in feedback and recognition. They're also willing to accept feedback from people within the organisation who are able to provide relevant input. They listen.

Engaged Owners would never say "my way or the highway." They're aware of their strengths but they're also aware of their limitations. They understand that the only way you build anything of significance is through teamwork, and they understand the value of having feedback from an engaged team.

"To win in the marketplace you must first win in the workplace."

– **Doug Conant**

Former CEO of the Campbell Soup Company

## Why being an Engaged Owner is important

In engagement (as in all things) you set the standard. Whether your culture runs on peaceful coexistence, paranoia, or something in between, your people will model their behavior on yours. So if you want engagement to be an ever present, ever growing, evergreen attribute in your organisation, the responsibility falls squarely on your shoulders. Think of an Engaged Owner as a maestro conducting an orchestra – your people look to you to lead from the front, pull everyone together, and unify them around your Engaged Purpose.

## What an Engaged Owner should **not** be: two common mistakes to avoid

### **Mistake #1. Intimidated by the challenge.**

Don't see the role of Chief Engagement Officer as a daunting, overwhelming task. Get it right and, as your organisation becomes more engaged, your team will take much of the responsibility for improving your organisations' engagement levels. But until they do, it's up to you! Of course, most business owners love their businesses, so they accept this responsibility with joy. We hope you will do the same, understanding that engagement doesn't have to be boring. Quite the opposite, in fact: it provides you and your team the opportunity for fun!

### **Mistake #2. Think you have to have all the answers.**

You don't – and you're not expected to. As Chief Engagement Officer it's reasonable to expect that you are very clear on the organisation's Purpose, and have a vision that you're committed to. It's not reasonable to expect you to have all the answers to the challenges that your organisation faces. Many answers can come from the people within the company, if you so empower them. Allow them to identify areas where attention is required, and to have input in solving the problems. Focus on your strengths and empower your team to focus on theirs.

*“My grandfather once said to me, ‘Stefan, always remember that the fish rots from the head.’ I asked him what he meant. He said, ‘If you buy a fish and leave it out, it starts to decay and it rots from the head first – it’s the same in business.’ In business, decay often comes from the top. As an Owner, it’s your responsibility not to let rot creep into your organisation so that it turns into a stinking fish!”*

**– Stefan Wissenbach**

Founder & Chief Engagement Officer, Engagement Multiplier

# Four golden rules for becoming an Engaged Owner



## 1. The goal is progress not perfection.

- Measure engagement every 90 days
- Meet with Leaders to turn insights into actions
- Demonstrate that action is being taken on an ongoing basis



## 2. Tell the truth!

- Be clear and straightforward when dealing with troublesome issues
- If there are problems, face up to them honestly
- Encourage honest and open two-way feedback



## 3. Let people try... and fail.

- Give Leaders and Employees a good measure of autonomy and a firm framework for what needs to be done and when
- Redefine *success* and make a commitment to let people try and fail



## 4. Recognise and celebrate.

- When individuals demonstrate outstanding initiative, don't just make a note of it – reward it
- Give out company prizes and meaningful recognition to motivate and engage everyone

*“Over time, providing that you persist in your commitment to engagement, responsibility naturally gets taken up by the people within the business. As that ownership responsibility transfers, the whole Engaged Organisation takes on an energy of its own as other people start suggesting improvements. Focussing on engagement becomes a common language that everyone understands.”*

– **Stefan Wissenbach**

Founder & Chief Engagement Officer, Engagement Multiplier

## A story from Stefan

Sometimes it's the little things that make the biggest difference.

### Here's an example:

I have offices in both London and Chicago. Prior to one of my visits to the US, Sarah from our Chicago office had gone above and beyond in her preparation for my busy two weeks of meetings. While still in the UK, I asked her if there was a “British” gift I could bring back with me to show my appreciation.

Her eventual response was simple – some English tea, crumpets and a Jo Malone scented candle. *Easy*, I thought, until she added, “Oh, and an English prince!”

“Done,” I blurted, liking a challenge. And so, in Chief Engagement Officer mode (and with help from my other incredible assistant, Jayne) I devised a solution.

A few days later, I walked into our Chicago office bearing tea, crumpets and candle, with my free arm around Prince Harry's shoulders. As I couldn't quite pull off getting a real-life prince to accompany me to surprise Sarah, I had instead procured a life-sized cardboard cut-out of one.

Sarah screamed, “OMG!” and the entire office enjoyed the moment. As she tells her colleagues, “He made me feel so appreciated! I was happy, proud, and felt special. It was fun and funny, but it was actually very cool.”



### **Stefan Wissenbach**

Founder & Chief Engagement Officer, Engagement Multiplier

## Are you an Engaged Owner?

**Let's look at each of the component parts that make up an Engaged Owner. Do you:**

- Have a Purpose and a vision you're passionate about and that keeps you on a forward trajectory?
- Share your inspiration and motivation, and connect your Leaders to the Purpose and vision?
- Embrace change and innovation?
- Have genuine concern for your employees, and actively encourage them to fulfill their own potential?
- Lead by example as the Chief Engagement Officer, and show passion for creating an Engaged Organisation?

Your goal should be to eventually answer **YES** to each of these questions.

## What being an Engaged Owner will do

Owners who use the Scorecard or Engagement Multiplier move to Engaged status quickly. In fact, the very act of committing to engagement, scoring it, following up and taking action raises scores.

Engaged Organisations are much easier to own and run than disengaged ones. They have lower employee turnover, lower waste and, best of all, higher morale. But it's not the organisation that motivates and engages its people; people motivate people. And as Chief Engagement Officer, it all begins with you!

**As a Chief Engagement Officer armed with an Engaged Purpose** and with clarity on what it takes to be an Engaged Owner, you will understand the areas where you need to focus. You probably already do many of the things we've mentioned – but there may be other things that you will now do slightly differently, or new approaches that you will now take. Our advice to you is to not try to do everything at once, but our advice is also that you do take action.

## About Engagement Multiplier

We enable businesses with identifiable ownership to measurably improve morale, culture and retention - and innovate, thrive and grow. We provide a unique structure and framework for companies all over the world to systematically measure and improve employee engagement every 90 days. Our technology enables growth-minded business leaders to harness the true power of their greatest asset – their employees – and build wonderful companies.

Over 90% of our clients achieve Engaged Organisation Accreditation in less than a year.

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