The ROI From Employee Engagement: A Case Study From the University of Wollongong

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AHEIA Higher Education HR Conference 2011, Adelaide
Agenda

• What is the link between engagement and performance at UoW and elsewhere?
• How has UoW achieved the highest levels of engagement among the 33 Australian & New Zealand universities surveyed by Voice Project?
• What have been the benefits and challenges of high engagement at UoW?
Passion & Progress

Engagement

Growth

Success
Engagement Within Universities

Faculties & Divisions in Lowest Scoring University

Employee Engagement

40% 45% 50% 55% 60% 65% 70% 75% 80% 85%
Progress at Wollongong

• Major Achievements
  – Research Performance (Top 10 in ARC Grant Income)
  – Teaching and Learning (A1 rating)
  – Student Satisfaction
  – Graduate Outcomes
  – Innovation
  – Infrastructure Development
Drivers of Engagement – Uni’s

- Higher: Teamwork, Talent, Motivation & Initiative, Organisation Direction, Work/Life Balance
- Lower: Supervision, Performance Appraisal, Safety, Technology Community Engagement, Workload
- Prioritise: Role Clarity, Diversity, Research, Teaching, Learning & Development, Involvement, Career Opportunities, Recruitment & Selection
- Maintain: Ethics, Mission & Values, Rewards & Recognition, Results Focus, Learning & Development, Research, Community Engagement

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Drivers of Engagement

- Evolved culture - “the Wollongong way”
- Leadership style
- Establishing trust; the way people experience the organisation
- Conscious Shift: IR to HR
- proactive/collaborative HR

OVER TO YOU

Questions?

What is your experience in trying to build engagement?
Benefits & Challenges

- Demonstrating benefits of high engagement
- Gaining support for future HR initiatives
- Ability to use data to attract talent
- Performance can be self reinforcing
- Possible plateauing of engagement
- Losing focus because no crisis to drive action
Responding to Results

• How do you choose what to work on?
• Organisation-wide vs localised action?
• UOW 2007: Cross-Unit Cooperation & Involvement
What We Did

• University wide consultation process
• Document best practice models
• Feedback to Deans & Directors; Executive Officers
Communication Results

Cross-Unit Cooperation

43 There is good communication across all sections of UOW

44 Knowledge and information are shared throughout UOW

45 There is cooperation between different sections in UOW

Involvement

49 I have input into everyday decision-making in UOW

50 I am encouraged to give feedback about things that concern me

51 I am consulted before decisions that affect me are made

Survey Experience

143 Feedback from employees is acted upon at UOW

144 I received feedback about the results of the 2007 Workforce Survey (answer "N/A" if you were not at UOW for the 2007 survey)

145 I have seen improvements in UOW resulting from the 2007 survey
Over To You

• Questions?
• What strategies have you seen that are effective in getting people and work units on board with a response action initiative?