Viewing a safety incident as a quality (productivity) upgrade opportunity: An application of Systems Thinking.

Dr John Whiteoak
The Situation:

33% engaged
49% not engaged
18% actively disengaged


Who's Sinking Your Boat?

Employee Engagement 2014
Background: Exploratory Mining Industry Research
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People with LowZE
**Engaged employees** are more likely to use their initiative to **suggest and implement improvements to safety systems**. 

Research by the SHRM Foundation found (in one manufacturing company) engaged employees were **five times less likely** to have a safety incident and **seven times less likely** to have a safety incident involving lost-time.

In Manufacturing (Harter et al. 2009) found that **the top 25%** of business units (in terms of engagement) have **49% less safety incidents** than the bottom 25%.

The average cost of a safety incident for a **non-engaged employee was $392**, compared with an average of **$63** for an engaged employee (Lockwood, 2007).
Force Field Analysis: Determining competing factors impacting safety

- 27 (includes 2 safety offices – 1 female)
- Average Age: 38.2 years (SD = 8.4)
- Industry Experience: 15.7 years (SD = 8.1)
- Supervisor Experience: 6 years (SD = 5.9 years)
- Reports: 12 (SD = 11.7)
- Safety Training: 40% of Supervisor = No.
- Number of companies = 5
Step 3: Main Survey

- Survey conducted on-site using tablets and hard copy
- 228 responses – 207 usable
- Only frontline staff
- Small incentive for participation
Two independent but related areas of safety identified as significant and important.
Comparing two individuals on their explicit safety scores.

Explicit Safety Model: 70.3% explained

Managers and Supervisors Perceived as Walking the Safety Talk

The variables on the chart represent elements of that are statistically significant in the regression equation. Each area provides potential strategies to improve scores on the construct but they may operate with different weightings.
Profiles of the Australian Road Worker
The Zone

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www.zoneofengagement.com
Predicting boredom-coping at work

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to explore the dimensions of boredom-coping in the workplace and develop a linear equation capable of predicting a single individual’s boredom-coping capacity.

Design/methodology/approach – The research employs a mixed-methods approach and triangulates the identification of themes through, consultation with five industry experts, 23 individual interviews and 169 survey respondents.

Findings – A linear composite that explains 41.4 percent of the variance in boredom-coping (r = 0.66, p<0.001) was developed. The model was derived from four constructs identified from primary qualitative data. These were, personality traits (i.e., conscientiousness, openness, work ethic, and extraversion), attitude to challenge, trainable abilities (i.e., practical intelligence, foresight ability, and situational awareness), and group potency.

Research limitations/implications – These findings provide research implications for the study of boredom-coping at work. Common-method artifacts are a potential limitation of the conclusions drawn. However, the mixed-methods approach, independent samples at each stage, and multiple data collection sites and times, supports the integrity of the findings discussed.

Practical implications – The practical implications of this research includes providing strategies for human resource decisions associated with recruitment, selection, and front-line training interventions. The model indicates training may be targeted at different areas of the equation with markedly different impact and return depending on the timed nature of interventions.

Originality/value – The findings support the development of approaches that may help to create a more engaged, productive, and well-adjusted workforce. The translation of the findings to the “bottom-line” is also significant.

Keywords Mixed methodologies, Conscientiousness, Attitude to challenge, Boredom-coping, Group potency, Practical intelligence, Situational awareness

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Boredom at work appears to be a fairly common phenomenon and is linked to many negative outcomes for individuals and organizations. For example, work-related boredom is found to have adverse effects on morale and quality of work (Thackray, 1981) and is claimed to be a significant issue in terms of impacting overall organizational performance (Gemmill and Oakley, 1992). However, researchers (i.e. Fisher, 1993; Loukidou et al., 2009; Shackleton, 1981; Vodanovich, 2003) have highlighted the inadequate attention boredom has received in the management literature. It is suggested that understanding individual differences in boredom-coping may be an appropriate strategy for managing boredom more effectively in the workplace (Game, 2007; Loukidou et al., 2009; Spector and Fox, 2010). Even so, this literature is under researched and requires more exploration (Game, 2007; Skowronska, 2012).

Contributing to this literature is important because employees who are able to better cope with boredom are likely to have higher levels of employee engagement. While the link between engagement and productivity is now more clearly established

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