

How to earn your employees' commitment

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Executive Overview

In today's team-based, empowered, and technology-dependent organizations, employees are increasingly expected to manage themselves. Fostering the employee commitment necessary for self-management requires clarifying and communicating a firm's mission, guaranteeing organizational justice, creating a sense of community, supporting employee development, and placing people first.

Motivating Employees in an Age of Empowerment

Viacom recently reached agreement to sell its Prentice Hall publishing operations to Pearson plc, for \$4.6 billion. In announcing the sale, Prentice Hall's president thanked its employees for their past hard work and dedication, and reminded them that during the transition, "it is more important than ever to focus on our individual responsibilities to ensure that our company performs at the highest levels."¹ His message spotlights a dilemma all managers have today: maintaining employee commitment—an employee's identification with and agreement to pursue the company's or the unit's mission—in the face of downsizings, mergers, and turbulent change.²

Managers today have numerous motivation tools they can use, ranging from incentives to job enrichment to participative management: Why, then, go through the trouble of winning commitment at all? For several reasons.

First, today's focus on teamwork, empowerment, and flatter organizations puts a premium of self-control or organizational citizenship behavior, "discretionary contributions that are organizationally related, but are neither explicitly required nor contractually rewarded by the organization, yet nevertheless contribute to its effective functioning,"³ and studies show commitment can encourage just such behavior. For example, one study concludes that "having a membership that shares the organization's goals and values can ensure that your individuals act instinctively to benefit the organization."⁴ Commitment—both to the organization, and to one's team—was positively re-

lated to "willingness to help" in another study.⁵ And another similarly concluded that organizational commitment was associated with the employees' and organization's ability to adapt to unforeseeable occurrences.⁶

Commitment has other favorable outcomes, too. Committed employees tend to have better attendance records and longer job tenure than less committed employees.⁷ Not surprisingly, they also tend to work harder at their jobs and perform better than do those with weak commitment.⁸ In summary, there is considerable evidence that committed employees will be more valuable employees than those with weak commitment.⁹ The question, then, is "how can a manager foster employee commitment?"

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In determining how companies win employee commitment, researchers have studied organizations ranging from utopian communities to business organizations to law firms to labor unions in America, Europe, and Japan. Our examples of how managers can foster commitment is not exhaustive. Such possible precursors of commitment as money are not included, in part because of their obviousness or because of insufficient research evidence.¹⁰ What follows, however, is a useful overview of the actions required to win commitment and how to implement them.

Clarify and Communicate Your Mission

A number of years ago, Rosabeth Moss Kanter conducted an investigation of commitment that focused not on businesses, but on Utopian communities such as the Shakers and the Oneida. Most of those communities were formed in the United States in the 1800s, usually with the aim of having people live together cooperatively, create their own governance, and operate according to a higher order of natural and spiritual laws. Communities like these, said Kanter, were held together not by coercion but by commitment. In Utopia, what people want to do is the same as what they have to do, and the interests of the individuals are congruent with those of the group.¹¹

Life in these communities was organized to support what Kanter calls "core commitment building processes." Kanter called one of these core processes transcendence, a process whereby someone "attaches his decision making perspective to a power greater than himself, surrendering to the higher meaning contained by the group and submitting to something beyond himself." This permits the person "to find himself anew in something larger and greater."¹² The key to achieving this, said Kanter, is creating a strong linkage between the mission and ideology on the one hand, and the person's understanding of how his or her role in the commune fits with the transcendent mission on the other. The commitment in these communities derived, in other words, in part from the power of their mission and ideology and from their members' willingness to accept the community's aims, both as their own and as part of a greater mission. The members became crusaders.

Is it realistic for business organizations to try to achieve the same commitment to a mission? Not just realistic, but essential. For one thing, having goals without commitment is futile. "It's not just the presence of a goal that stimulates progress, [but] also the level of commitment to the goal," as James Collins and Jerry Porras note in their book *Built to Last*.¹³ Conversely, commitment without a cause is meaningless.

In practice, there are several things a firm can do to achieve this feeling among employees that they are part of something larger and greater than themselves: create a shared mission and an ideology that lays out a basic way of thinking and doing things; create institutional charisma by linking their missions and values to a higher calling; and promote the commitment of employees to the mission and ideology, for example through selective hiring and focused, value-based orientation.

Clarify the Mission and Ideology

A clear mission and ideology provides a double benefit: the mission provides a focus to which employees can commit, while the values that make up the firm's ideology provide internalized guidelines for their behaviors.

Saturn Corporation provides a good illustration of how to clarify and communicate a mission and ideology. Each Saturn employee receives a pocket card listing Saturn's mission, philosophy, and values. The Saturn mission—"[to] market vehicles developed and manufactured in the United States that are world leaders in quality, cost and customer satisfaction"—is supported by the more detailed Saturn philosophy—showing how, for example, Saturn will meet its customers' and workers' needs. The pocket card then lists and explains Saturn's basic values, which focus on customer enthusiasm, excelling, teamwork, respect for the individual, and continuous improvement.

Make it Charismatic

While not all business firms would want to emulate the spiritual higher-callings of Kanter's early communes, it is possible to couch a mission so that it evokes a higher, charismatic calling that employees can espouse.¹⁴ Like Medieval crusaders, employees then do their best for the firm, not just because they're paid to do so, but because it is a higher calling.

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The mission of Ben & Jerry's Homemade symbolizes the founders' unique idea of what a business should be and provides the firm and its employees with an ideology that represents a higher, transcendent calling to which all can commit. The mission statement reads, in part:

Ben & Jerry's is dedicated to the creation and demonstration of a new corporate concept of linked prosperity . . .

Social mission: To operate the company in a way that actively recognizes the central role that business plays in the structure of a society by initiating innovative ways to improve

the quality of life of a broad community: local, national, and international . . .¹⁵

The company's founders practice what they preach. Ben & Jerry's has "green teams" that are responsible for assessing the firm's environmental impact in all areas of operation. It still purchases many of its raw materials—often at above-market prices—from suppliers so as to benefit indigenous people in Maine or in the Brazilian rain forest.

However, formulating an ideology and a mission, even a charismatic one, isn't enough. Employees then need to be steeped in the ideology and to accept it as their own. In her study of Utopian communities, Kanter found that successful communities achieved this by requiring commitment to the ideology, by expecting recruits to take vows, by enforcing fairly exhaustive procedures for choosing members, and by emphasizing tradition. Modern-day equivalents to these practices in business firms include value-based hiring and orientation, and ceremonials that enhance tradition.

Use Value-Based Hiring Practices

In many firms the process of linking employees to ideology begins before the worker is even hired, with value-based hiring practices. These firms first clarify what their basic values are. Then they enforce procedures for screening new employees, require evidence of commitment to the firms' values by their candidates, and reject large numbers of prospective employees. The net effect is to select employees whose values and skills match the firm's ideology and who are thus well on the road to becoming believers before they are even hired. Value-based hiring screens out those who might not fit.

For example, using tests, interviews, and background checks, Ben & Jerry's screens out managers who don't share the firm's social goals, Toyota Manufacturing USA screens out non-team players, and Goldman Sachs emphasizes integrity. Toyota applicants traverse an extensive five-day testing and interviewing program focused on teamwork, quality orientation, and communications ability—the values Toyota covets.

Stress Values-Based Orientation and Training

Steeping the new employees in the values and culture is also important.¹⁶ For example, the orientation (or, as they call it, "assimilation") program at Toyota covers traditional topics such as company benefits, but is intended mostly to convert new team members to the firm's ideology of quality,

teamwork, personal development, open communication, and mutual respect. Combined with continuing team- and quality oriented training, employees completing the four-day process are steeped in—and, ideally, converted to—Toyota's ideology, mission of quality, and values of teamwork, unending incremental improvement, and problem solving.

Build the Tradition

Tradition-building symbols, stories, rites, and ceremonials can further enhance employees' conversion to cultural believers. One Saturn vice president commented: "Creating a value system that encourages the kind of behavior you want is not enough. The challenge is then to engage in those practices that symbolize those values, and tell people what it's really okay to do—and what not [to do]. Actions, in other words, speak much more loudly than words."¹⁷

Companies are doing this in a variety of ways. A company where having fun is both a basic value and an inalienable right, Ben & Jerry's has a "joy gang," a voluntary group that meets once or twice a week to create new ways to help employees enjoy their work. The joy gang is a concrete example of Ben & Jerry's ideology, which emphasizes charity, fun, and goodwill toward fellow workers. At the annual JCPenney "HCSC" inauguration meetings, new management associates solemnly swear allegiance to the JCPenney Idea and receive HCSC label pins, signifying the firm's basic values of honor, confidence, service, and cooperation.¹⁸

Guarantee Organizational Justice

Organizational justice—"the extent to which fair procedures and processes are in place and adhered to and the extent to which individuals see their leaders as being fair and sincere and having logic or rationale for what they do"¹⁹—also plays a role in fostering commitment. One study concluded that "Considerable evidence supports a link between the procedural justice associated with organizational policies and the affective commitment of employees."²⁰ Another found that satisfaction with the two-way communication in the organization contributed to organizational commitment.²¹ Another study concluded that discretionary contributions above and beyond those specifically required by the organization increased with increases in perceived organizational justice.²²

Fair procedures and processes embodied in formal grievance procedures are one obvious source of organizational justice. Involving employees in

decisions by getting their input, and ensuring that they understand why decisions were made is another.²³

Have Comprehensive Grievance Procedures

Federal Express's Guaranteed Fair Treatment Procedure is a good example of the former. As its employee handbook says,

Perhaps the cornerstone of Federal Express' "people" philosophy is the Guaranteed Fair Treatment Procedure (GFTP). This policy affirms your right to appeal any eligible issue through this process of systematic review by progressively higher levels of management. Although the outcome is not assured to be in your favor, your right to participate within the guidelines of the procedure is guaranteed. At Federal Express, where we have a "people-first" philosophy, you have a right to discuss your complaints with management without fear of retaliation.²⁴

In brief, GFTP contains three steps. In step one, management review, a complainant submits a written complaint to a manager, who reviews all relevant information, holds a conference with the employee, and makes a decision either to uphold, modify, or overturn the original supervisor's actions.²⁵ In step two, officer review, the complainant can then submit a written complaint to a vice president or senior vice president, who reviews the case, conducts an additional investigation, and upholds, overturns, or modifies the manager's actions. In step three, executive appeals review, the complainant can then submit a written complaint to an appeals board comprising the CEO, president, chief personnel officer, and two senior vice presidents. The board reviews all relevant information and upholds or overturns the decision. When there is a question of fact, the appeals board may initiate a board of review.

Provide Extensive Two-Way Communications

Providing for plenty of opportunities for two-way communication is another way to cultivate the feeling that the work experience is a just one. Indeed, a Saturn assembly team, when asked, "What's the first thing you would tell a boss to do to get commitment?" responded, in unison, "Tell them to listen."²⁶

Saturn's assemblers get information continuously via the plant's internal television network. FedEx's Survey Feedback Action program lets em-

ployees express feelings about the company and their managers. "Hotline" programs are another option. For example, Toyota's handbook states, "Don't spend time worrying about something. Speak up!" The company's "Hotline" gives team members a 24-hour channel for bringing questions or problems to management's attention. Employees can pick up any phone, dial the hotline extension, and leave messages on a recorder. All hotline messages are reviewed by the human resources manager and thoroughly investigated. If it is decided a particular question would be of interest to other Toyota team members, then the questions and Toyota's response is posted on plant bulletin boards. Employees wanting a personal response must leave their names, but no attempt is made to identify anonymous callers.²⁷

Create a Sense of Community

Kanter, in her study of Utopian communities, also observed that all the successful communities she studied shared a sense of community, one in which "connection, belonging, participation in a whole, mingling of the self and the group, and an equal opportunity to contribute and to benefit all are part."²⁸ This sense of community contributed to creating commitment among the communities' members, who developed a strong "we-feeling"—that they were like a family. The result was a "cohesive, emotionally involving, and effectively satisfying community."²⁹

Kanter identified several practices through which the communities fostered this sense of community. There was usually some homogeneity of background among members, which made it easier for them to share common experiences and identify with one another and with the community. There was also some communal sharing of both property and work, as members shared to some extent the assets of the community and the output of its efforts. Communal work provided an opportunity for joint effort, with all members, as far as possible, performing all tasks for equal rewards. Finally, there was regularized group contact, continuing activities that brought the individual into periodic contact with the group as a whole. All these practices have their practical parallels in business organizations today.

Build Value-Based Homogeneity

Hiring a homogeneous workforce in these days of cultural diversity and equal employment opportunity requires focusing on values, skills, and interests rather than on discriminatory traits such as

ethnic background. Many firms thus explicitly select employees based on those values that are desirable to the firm. At Goldman Sachs, these values include excellence, creativity and imagination; the ability to assume responsibility rapidly; teamwork and dedication to the firm; intense effort in work; and integrity and honesty.³⁰ At Toyota, interpersonal skills, reasoning skills, flexibility, and willingness to be team members characterize

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successful employees (who are always referred to as "team members"). The point is that in firms like these, the people who are hired are already well on their way to fitting in. They are homogeneous, not in the sense of being all-white or all-male or all-Ivy league, but in their potential fit with the firm's values. They are people who by aspirations, values, and skills should fit right in.

Share and Share Alike

Despite significant disparities between the salaries of executives and workers, it's also possible to foster a sense that everyone shares in a firm's fortunes. At FedEx, for instance, chairman Fred Smith has no assigned parking spot and there are no company cars. There is no executive lunchroom and the executives' offices are modest. "We do as much as we can to minimize differences between non-executive levels and ourselves," one top FedEx manager explained.

Profit sharing can play a role too. The legendary number of millionaires at Microsoft is one notable example. Increasingly, substantial bonuses, profit sharing, and pay-for-performance plans enable employees throughout industry to appreciate that not only top managers get a sizable share of the pie.

Emphasize Barnraising, Cross-Utilization, and Teamwork

Getting everyone to work cooperatively on a project and even to share work and jobs also fosters a sense of community. Even today in some Utopian communities, people still get together build a house or a barn. Much the same applies in

business: Delta Airlines airport work teams routinely rotate jobs; reservations clerks fill in at the check-in ramp or in baggage handling if the need arises. The Delta Policy Manual calls the practice cross-utilization.³¹ Organizing around teams—especially self-managing teams—is another way to enhance the feeling that the work is shared. The members of self-managing teams at firms from Saturn to American Express often share each other's work and routinely rotate jobs.

Get Together

In many companies, frequent group meetings and other regularized contacts further enhance employees' sense of community. Ben & Jerry's has monthly staff meetings in the receiving bay of the Waterbury, Vermont plant. Production stops and all employees attend. The firm's joy gangs organize regular "joy events," including Cajun parties, table tennis contests, and manufacturing appreciation days, all aimed at getting employees together.

At Federal Express, daily teleconferenced meetings describe the previous day's accomplishments. Toyota has a TV system called Toyota Network News, and spends about \$250,000 annually on a "perfect attendance" meeting to which all high-attendance employees are invited. At Mary Kay Cosmetics, weekly meetings of directors and their sales consultants similarly serve to reinforce the sense of communion and togetherness.

Support Employee Development

Studies also suggest employees are more committed to employers who are more committed to the employees' long-term career development.³² For example, managers in eight large U.S. organizations were asked to evaluate whether their firms had fulfilled their promises and met the managers' expectations. Those who answered affirmatively were much more likely to be committed to the organization, results that underscore the role of career satisfaction and success in winning commitment.³³ "The best route to employee commitment," the study concluded, is "for the organization to take the time and the trouble to provide each manager with the experience he or she needs—even craves—at each stage of his or her career."³⁴

An analysis of employee commitment among hospital administrators, nurses, service workers, and clerical employees and among scientists and engineers from a research lab concluded that the employer's ability to fulfill the employee's per-

sonal career aspirations had a marked effect on employee commitment. As this study summarized,

Individuals come to organizations with certain needs, desires, skills, and so forth and expect to find a work environment where they can utilize their abilities and satisfy many of their basic needs. When the organization provides such a vehicle, the likelihood of increasing commitment is apparently enhanced. When the organization is not dependable, however, or where it fails to provide employees with challenging and meaningful tasks, commitment levels tend to diminish.³⁵

A study of employees of a manufacturing plant similarly found that internal mobility and promotion from within, company-sponsored training and development, and job security were all correlated with employee commitment. As these researchers concluded,

...commitment is higher among employees who believe they are being treated as resources to be developed rather than commodities to buy and sell. Even controlling for other known antecedents, employees are committed to the extent that they believe the company is providing a long-term developmental employment opportunity.³⁶

Anecdotal evidence from the author's studies at Saturn and Federal Express support this idea. In the words of one Saturn assembler,

I'm committed to Saturn in part for what they did for me; for the 300-plus hours of training in problem solving and leadership that helped me expand my personal horizons; for the firm's "Excel" program that helps me push myself to the limit; and because I know that at Saturn I can go as far as I can go. This company wants its people to be all that they can be ...³⁷

Similarly, one Federal Express manager explained,

At Federal Express, the best I can be is what I can be here. I have been allowed to grow [at Federal Express]. People here are not turned on by money. The biggest benefit is that Federal Express made me a man. It gave me the confidence and self-esteem to become the person I had the potential to become.

The net effect is that employees become committed to firms that are committed to them—to their development, to their well being, and to their desire to become the people they always hoped they could be. Employers can show such commitment in several ways.

Commit to Actualizing

What companies believe and commit to drives what they do. Employers seeking to actualize their employees must therefore start by committing to do so, and then memorialize that commitment in their literature and management training. A top executive at JCPenney described his company's policy on development this way:

We have an obligation to develop our people to the fullest. You never know how high is high ... one of the best measures of a manager's effectiveness is the length of the list of names of those he helped to develop career wise. For me, one of the truest measures of a Penney manager's effectiveness is how many people would put you on the list of those who helped their careers here.

Provide First-year Job Challenge

Employees bring their needs, aspirations, and hopes to their jobs, and become committed to employers that take concrete steps to help them develop their abilities and achieve their potential. Young graduates or new recruits often start their jobs expecting challenging assignments to help them test and prove their abilities. Providing such challenging first jobs is therefore a practice at many firms. Young professionals at Goldman Sachs are expected to contribute at once and immediately find themselves on teams involved in challenging projects. As one manager there explained,

Even our young people often start out handling millions of dollars of responsibility. And at a meeting with a client, the partner in charge will often not talk first at the meeting, but the youngest will. At Goldman Sachs, you take the responsibility and you're supported by the team. That's what attracts people to Goldman Sachs—ability to make decisions early.

Enrich and Empower

Behavioral scientists have long encouraged job enrichment—increasing the breadth of responsibility

and self-management in the job—as a way to appeal to employees' higher level needs. The effect of such enrichment can, in fact, be almost intoxicating. Here's how one Saturn assembler described the experience of self-managing teams:

You don't have anyone here who is a supervisor. You don't experience supervision. We are supervised by ourselves. We become responsible to people we work with every day. What I do affects my people. In other firms you're treated like children and here we are treated like adults. We make up our own work schedule. We do our own budgeting and buying of tools. We decide and improve on the work process by consensus.

Promote From Within

Promotion from within is not always feasible in today's business environment. But there are benefits to letting employees know a firm has fair promotional practices. Here it's important to distinguish between promotion from within programs and policies. Policies such as "open positions are filled, whenever possible, by qualified candidates from within the existing work force" are one thing. The hard part is to breathe life into such policies by organizing your HR processes to support them.

Managers can do several things to create more meaningful promotion from within practices. Career-oriented appraisals are one component. Many employers don't just assess past performance, but link an employee's performance, career preferences, and developmental needs in a formal career plan. As Delta's HR manager explained:

Our annual evaluations are formal and include an interview. We touch on whether the employee is making progress or not, review his or her past experience, and discuss where that person is going with his or her career. The formal evaluation forces the supervisor and employee to communicate and talk about the person's career path.

An effective career-records/job-posting system can also bolster a firm's program of promotion from within by ensuring that an inside candidate's career goals and skills are matched openly, fairly, and effectively with promotional opportunities. For example, FedEx's electronic Job Change Applicant Tracking System announces new openings every Friday. All employees posting for a position are given numerical scores based on job performance

and length of service and are advised whether they have been chosen as candidates.

Provide Developmental Activities

Developmental activities such as career workshops enhance employees' opportunities for promotion from within, appeal to their desire to grow and to learn, provide more opportunities for lateral moves, and give them a chance to move on to another company. Saturn's career-growth workshop uses vocational guidance tools (including a skills-assessment disk) to help employees identify skills they need to develop. "You assess yourself and then your team assesses you," is how one Saturn employee put it. Tuition reimbursement, company-sponsored training and development, and other developmental activities are available to help Saturn employees develop those skills.

The Question of Employee Security

While few firms promise lifetime employment, incurring the costs of value-based hiring, extensive training, empowering, and developing employees without some job security is somewhat self-defeating.

Some companies provide job security while making it clear that their commitment to job security is a commitment to do their best, but not a guarantee. A Federal Express executive emphasized that "No-layoff is a commitment, not a policy. There are no guarantees, but the firm is on record as having a strong commitment to make every effort not to lay off personnel except in the most extreme economic circumstances, as determined by the chief executive officer." Delta Airlines tries to minimize layoffs by keeping a small temporary work force in airport operations and regional offices, that may ebb and flow with seasonal changes.

Commit to People-First Values

The commitment-building processes—clarifying and communicating a mission, guaranteeing organizational justice, creating a sense of community, and supporting employee development—all rest on one foundation, and that is the employer's commitment to values that put people first.

Studies do suggest that treating employees as important and respected individuals contributes to their commitment.³⁸ The extent to which employees are made to feel that they are making important contributions to the organization is a "central theme" that emerges from the commitment research.³⁹ And, the research notwithstanding,

it's hard to imagine being serious about organizational justice, creating a sense of community, or supporting employee development if you're not seriously committed to respecting your employees as individuals. Operationally, companies accomplish this in several ways.

Put It In Writing

A good first step is to replace talk with action and to codify and distribute the firm's people-first values. FedEx's Manager's Guide, for instance, states: "I have an inherent right to be treated with respect and dignity and that right should never be violated."⁴⁰

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Saturn employees carry pocket cards that lists the firm's values, one of which says:

Trust and respect for the individual: we have nothing of greater value than our people. We believe that demonstrating respect for the uniqueness of every individual builds a team of confident, creative members possessing a high degree of initiative, self-respect, and self-discipline.

Hire "Right-Kind" Managers

Putting the company's people-first values into practice means that managers must have internalized these values and become committed to them. In many firms, this means hiring the right kind of people in the first place, and then carefully indoctrinating them in the gospel of respect. FedEx's program provides one good example. All FedEx supervisory candidates must enroll in a special leader identification program to prove they have the values and skills to be managers. About 20 percent of these candidates fall out after the first phase of the program—"Is Management for Me?"—a one-day session that familiarizes them with the manager's job. This session is followed by three months of self-evaluations and supervisory assessments of the candidates' values and skills, and a series of peer assessments and panel interviews with senior managers. Management training sessions in the firm's Leadership Institute then

reinforce FedEx's values and indoctrinates the new managers in the principles and values of the firm.

Walk the Talk

Similarly, Saturn Corporation translates its people-first values into practice every day. Extensive two-way communication systems (frequent meetings, open-door policies, and so forth), job security, team-centered work groups, and an emphasis on employee self-actualization—giving each employee an opportunity to be all he or she can be through involvement in most job-related decisions, plus promotion from within and extensive career assessment, training, and development programs—all reflect Saturn's people-first values. As one Saturn vice president put it, Saturn's emphasis on igniting employee commitment stems from

... creating a value system that encourages the kind of behavior we knew we wanted. We knew we had to put in an actionable value system that changed how managers thought and how people built cars. If you start with the premise that you trust people and that they will do a good job, it takes you in a whole new direction. But if you really want to trust people, you have to show that you do and you start by eliminating all those things that say, "I don't trust you." That includes time clocks, gates, and hourly pay, for example.

Summing Up: How to Earn Your Employees' Commitment

Managers today have a dilemma: maintaining employee commitment in the face of downsizings, mergers, and turbulent change. It is, in a very real sense, a paradoxical situation: on the one hand today's focus on teamwork, empowerment, and flatter organizations puts a premium on just the sort of self-motivation that one expects to get from committed employees; on the other hand, environmental forces are acting to diminish the foundations of employee commitment.

Over the past 30 years or so, we've learned quite a bit about how to win commitment. The evidence suggests that winning commitment requires a comprehensive, multifaceted management system, one consisting of an integrated and internally consistent package of concrete actions and policies. The main steps and substeps in implementing such a commitment-oriented management system would include the following:

- Commit to people-first values: Put it in writing; hire right-kind managers; walk the talk.
- Clarify and communicate your mission: Clarify the mission and ideology; make it charismatic; use value-based hiring practices; stress values-based orientation and training; build the tradition.
- Guarantee organizational justice: Have a comprehensive grievance procedure; provide for extensive two-way communications.
- Create a sense of community: Build value-based homogeneity; share and share alike; emphasize barnraising, cross-utilization, and teamwork; get together.
- Support employee development: Commit to actualizing; provide first year job challenge; enrich and empower; promote from within; provide developmental activities; provide employee security without guarantees.

Endnotes

¹ Newcomb, J. 1998. Letter to employees, May 17.

² A variety of definitions, generally focusing on different facets of commitment, have been proposed. Meyer & Allen, for instance, discuss affective commitment, which "refers to the employees' emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization." Porter et al. defined organizational commitment as a strong belief in, and acceptance of, the organization's goals and values, a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and a strong desire to remain in the organization. See Meyer, J. P. & Allen, J. J. 1997. *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 11, 12. For other definitions see, for instance, Becker, T. 1995. The multidimensional view of commitment and the theory of reasoned action: A comparative evaluation. *Journal of Management*, 21(4), 617-638; Allen, N. 1996. Affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization: An examination of construct validity. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, December, 49(3), 252-276; Cooke, D. 1997. Discriminant validity of the organizational commitment questionnaire. *Psychological Reports*, April, 8(2), 431-441; and Wright, P. M., et al. 1994. On the meaning and measurement of goal commitment. *Journal to Applied Psychology*, 79(6), 795-803. Chris Argyris recently distinguished between two kinds of commitment, internal commitment and external commitment: see, Argyris, C. 1998. Empowerment: The Emperor's new clothes, *Harvard Business Review*, May-June, 99-100; Hollenback and Klein, define goal commitment as the determination to try for a goal and the unwillingness to abandon or lower that goal: Hollenbeck, J. R. & Klein, H. J. 1987. Goal commitment and the goal setting process: Problems, prospects, and proposals for future research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72, 212-220. Porter, L. W., Steers, R., Mowday, R. T., & Boulian, P. V. 1974. Unit performance, situational factors, and employee attitudes in spatially separated work units. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 15, 87-98.

³ Meyer and Allen, op. cit., 34.

⁴ O'Reilly, C., III & Chatman, J. 1986. Organizational commitment and psychological attachment: The affective compliance, identification, and internalization on pro-social behavior. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71, 493.

⁵ Bishop, J. W. & Scott, K. D. 1997. How commitment affects team performance. *HRMagazine*, February, 107-111.

⁶ Angle, H. & Perry, J. 1981. An empirical assessment of organizational commitment and organizational effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, March, 26, 1-13.

⁷ Mowday, R., Porter, L., & Steers, R. 1982. *Employee-Organization Linkages: The Psychology of Commitment, Absenteeism, and Turnover*. New York: Academic Press, 36-37; Kline, C. & Peters, L. 1991. Behavioral commitment and tenure of new employees: A replication and extension. *The Academy of Management Journal*, 34(1), March, 194-204; Somers, M. J. 1995. Organizational commitment, turnover and absenteeism: An examination of direct and interaction effects. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 16, 49-58; Bishop, J. W. & Scott, K. D. 1997. How commitment affects team performance. *HRMagazine*, February, 107-111.

⁸ Meyer & Allen, op. cit., 28-29. Keep in mind, though, that the relations between commitment and performance are not always so predictable, and even in this particular case, according to the authors, "Many of these findings are based on employee reports of their own behavior." For further discussion see Benkhoff, B. 1997. Ignoring commitment is costly: New approaches establish the missing link between commitment and performance. *Human Relations*, June, 50(6), 701-726.

⁹ Meyer & Allen, op. cit., p. 38.

¹⁰ Demographic variables, organizational factors (including organizational size), management style, and organizational climate are among the other antecedents of commitment that have been studied. See, for example, Sommer, S., Bae, S. H., & Luthans, F. 1996. Organizational commitment across cultures: The impact of antecedents on Korean employees. *Human Relations*, 49(7), 977-993; and Wallace, J. 1995. Corporatist control and organizational commitment among professionals: The case of lawyers working in law firms. *Social Forces*, March, Vol. 73(3), 811-839, for example.

¹¹ Kanter, R. M. 1972. *Commitment and Community: Communes and Utopias in Sociological Perspective*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1. Copyright 1972 by the President and Fellows of Harvard College. Applying conclusions like hers—based, as they are, on a special type of organization—to a corporate setting is always risky. However, there are some corporate lessons to be learned in what she found.

¹² Kanter, op. cit., 74.

¹³ Collins, J. & Porras, J. 1997. *Built to Last*. New York: Harper Business, 100.

¹⁴ Based on Dessler, G. 1992. *Winning Commitment*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

¹⁵ Ben & Jerry's 1990 Annual Report, 5.

¹⁶ See, for example, Laker, D. 1995. The impact of alternative socialization tactics on self-managing behavior and organizational commitment. *Journal of Social Behavior & Personality*, September, 10(3), 645-660.

¹⁷ Personal interview with Bob Boruff, vice president, Saturn, March 1992.

¹⁸ Dessler, op. cit., 86.

¹⁹ For a discussion of definitions of organizational justice see, for example, Skarlicki, D. & Latham, G. 1996. Increasing citizenship behavior within a labor union: A test of organizational justice theory. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81(2), 161-169.

²⁰ Meyer & Allen, op. cit., 47.

²¹ Varona, F. 1995. Communication satisfaction and organizational commitment: A study in three Guatemalan organizations. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, March, 53(9-A), 3048.

²² Skarlicki, D. & Latham, G. 1996. Increasing citizenship behavior.

²³ Kim, W. C. & Manborgne, R. 1997. Fair process: Managing in the knowledge economy. *Harvard Business Review*, July/August, 65-66.

²⁴ The Federal Express Employee Handbook, August 7, 1989, 89.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Dessler, op. cit., 87.

²⁷ Team Member Handbook, Toyota Motor Manufacturing, USA, February 1988, 52-53.

²⁸ Kanter, op. cit. You should note that the next line in her quote is "The principle is 'from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.'" Thus we have to be quite choosy about which practices might be applicable in a corporate setting.

²⁹ Ibid, 93.

³⁰ Except as noted, the discussion of "Creating a Sense of Community" is based on Dessler, op. cit., 50-60.

³¹ Delta's Personnel Policy Manual, 18.

³² Wood, S. & Albanese, M. 1995. Can we speak of high commitment management on the shop floor? *Journal of Management Studies*, 32(2), March, 215-247.

³³ Buchanan, B. 1975. To walk an extra mile: The whats, whens, and whys of organizational commitment. *Organizational Dynamics*, Spring, 75.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Steers, R. M. 1977. Antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 22, March, 53.

³⁶ Gaertner, K. & Nollen, S. 1989. Career experiences, perceptions of employment practices, and psychological commitment in the organization. *Human Relations*, 42(11), 987.

³⁷ Except as noted, the discussion on "Support Employee Development" is based on Dessler, G. 1992. *Winning Commitment*, 110-138.

³⁸ See, for example, Steers, op. cit., 53.

³⁹ Meyer & Allen, op. cit., 48.

⁴⁰ Except as noted, the discussion of "Commit to People-First Values" is based on Dessler, op. cit., 28-33.



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