

How Can Senior Leaders Keep the Vision Visible?



Are your senior leaders providing sufficient clarity and direction around the future of the organization? According to our research, rather than being clear, things are looking quite blurry. Our recent [Global Trends in Employee Engagement](#) report reveals a marked deterioration in perceptions around the clarity with which senior leaders explain how to deliver on strategy, eroding the visibility and impact of communication. Furthermore, while we know that lack of clear vision and direction has a notable negative impact on employee engagement and intent to stay, confidence in senior leadership and perceptions around their people focus has also dropped.

This blurriness may come as no surprise, since many organizations are rethinking strategy and realigning processes to adapt to changing economic and geopolitical conditions, new ways of working and rising employee expectations. Fluidity and volatility of doing business are here to stay. The challenge is to embrace these changes and clearly articulate a cohesive vision, rather than allow them to serve as a cause for confusion or lack of clarity around what's to come next.

When a clear vision/direction is in place, people are more confident about the soundness of decisions being made, the utility of training, the appropriateness of performance management, the wisdom of investing in ideas that drive future success, the ability to attract and promote the right people and ultimately, to deliver on the value proposition. In short, in times of change, having a clear vision provides the organization a path through change that helps employees feel more confident that their organization is moving in the right direction versus waiting to envision what will happen. This enables employees to envision their own future at the organization, which in turns helps attract and retain top talent.

So, what can senior leaders do to improve the clarity and visibility of the vision they craft and communicate? They need to focus on three areas:

Authenticity:

The old model of the senior leaders as omniscient will not survive in a BANI (brittle, anxious, nonlinear and incomprehensible) world. Senior leaders need to openly admit that they do not have all the answers—especially on when and where to tack on a day-to-day basis—in uncharted waters. However, they can set the



direction of travel. They are equipped with tools and technology that can help them read weak signals. It is on that basis that they can act decisively, as they must.

Inclusion: _____

As a correlate of authenticity, senior leaders need to emphasize that leadership, even at the very top of the house, is a “team sport.” To maximize the power of the team, senior leaders need to create a safe space and a climate in which even at the C-Suite, people feel comfortable sharing their perspectives with candor and directness. Senior leaders often erroneously associate the expression of a strong point of view with strong and effective leadership. Instead, great senior leaders ask great questions, elicit diverse points of view, avoid premature false consensus and promote dialogue to arrive at better decisions, all the while building a vision that leverages a culture of belonging and inclusion.



can actually be visualized, the experience of that vision coming alive that can be felt almost viscerally. In the post-pandemic world and in the face of a [Talent Uprising](#), that vision must be founded on a strong sense of purpose. A simple clear message must be repeated over and over by senior leaders, using the same language conveyed through multiple channels and forums. This is a time to set direction and make sure that all key messages align with that direction.

If organizations want to drive employee engagement and invigorate their talent, leaders must act now to provide the organization with a clear vision for the future. In turn, a compelling vision will motivate employees to act with passion, determination and purpose, ensuring that everyone works toward a common goal, to turn the vision into reality.

Clarity: _____

As in many areas of leadership practice, less is more with respect to crafting and communicating a compelling vision. With core messages expressed in concrete terms that

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