

# Employee Motivation, Engagement & Performance Strategies for Retail Companies

Proven strategies to keep your employees motivated — and your customers coming back to buy from you for years to come...

**T**here's no doubt about it, these are challenging times in the retail sector — especially if you are a traditional bricks and mortar retailer.

Competition is up, fixed overheads are up, employee costs are up, cost-of-sales are up, just about everything has increased... including your customers' expectations and the buying choices available to them.

Vying for share of wallet has never been more difficult — as consumers now have an endless array of choice with off-line, on-line and multi-channel retailers.

If attracting a new customer or prising them away from your competitors wasn't difficult and expensive enough in the first place, *keeping* customers so you can maximise their life-time value carries its own challenges too.

One bad experience, or one indifferent encounter with your sales or customer service staff and that could pretty much be it! The marketing money you spent on acquiring that customer is wasted, as they're off to your competitor, telling others about their disappointing experience and damaging your carefully crafted brand image in the process.

## Employee Motivation, Engagement and Retention

CEOs, HR directors and executives responsible for growth know only too well the importance of *employees* in keeping customers loyal, repeat buying and referring.



**Employee motivation, engagement and retention have a direct impact on the performance and profitability of retail companies**

However executives have their work cut out as issues such as employee motivation, retention and overall engagement are an ongoing challenge in the retail sector.

Unmotivated or unengaged staff, and high levels of staff turnover make it more and more difficult for retailers to deliver a consistent world-class experience to their customers.

When *employees* are disengaged, this reflects on the level of service *customers* receive and reduces the likelihood of them repeat buying or referring.

Given that the link between happy motivated staff, and higher revenues and profits has conclusively been proven, it's

no wonder that executives in the retail sector are constantly seeking out new ways to motivate, engage and retain their employees.

One such strategy which is universally recognised to deliver results, is *mentoring*.

## Managers as Mentors

Mentoring has long been the tool of choice for developing senior retail executives, but the high cost of bringing in external mentors into a company means that mentoring is prohibitively expensive for front-line employees.

However, there is a way for your employees to receive the benefits of mentoring, and that is for your *managers*

to become *mentors* to your employees.

In fact, mentoring is exactly what your managers should be doing to create a workforce which is engaged, motivated, passionate and driven.

When you give your managers the tools to become *mentors* to your staff you quickly create an environment where your employees feel connected and engaged with your company, and committed to serving your customers at the highest level — making your company stand out as the ‘retailer of choice’ in your sector.

### The ‘5i’ Approach To Mentoring

Underpinning the ‘*managers as mentors*’ approach are the principles of *5i*.

*5i* works whether your staff are customer-facing on the shop floor, or work behind the scenes in fulfilment, inventory or buying. These proven five steps to mentoring are guaranteed to deliver the strongest results for your business.

Here’s the *5i* approach:

**1 — Involve:** The key to creating higher levels of motivation, engagement and ultimately retaining more key staff is to involve your employees in your business.

It’s to make them aware of your business at a deeper and wider commercial level, so they understand the importance of your customer, and why customers choose to buy from you, and what brings them back each week, month or even year.

The more your employees understand about your business, the more they feel part of it, and the more they want to take responsibility for it, and serve your customers at a higher level. When your customers feel that extra level of service and attention, it’s much easier for them to decide to come back and buy from you, or positively refer you to their friends, family and business associates.

**2 — Instil:** You need to instil a new way of thinking into your employees which gets them to see your business through a different set of eyes— the eyes of a *business owner* (i.e. a retailer).

When your managers mentor your employees, and teach them the fundamentals of business (which all successful business owners know about), you create a workforce which is motivated, takes extra responsibility, and is willing to do whatever it takes to make your customers come back and buy from you time and time again.

**3 — Inspire:** Given that your people are the critical key to the success of your company, it’s vital that every day, you get the best out of each and every one of them.

Your managers (both store managers and area managers) are *role-models* in your business who need to set a higher standard and inspire your team to achieve more than they ever thought possible.

The greatest retailers in the world aim high and set impeccable standards of excellence. They constantly thrill, wow and dazzle their customers. Your managers (as mentors) need to inspire your employees to reach the same high standards of excellence, not settling for anything less.

**4 — Ignite:** Your workforce is awash with ideas which could be worth millions to your business. You simply need to ignite a new level of creativity in your staff to tap into their ideas.

When your managers become mentors to your employees, one of their key roles must be to find the winning ideas which are buried deep in your workforce, and help turn those ideas into new revenue, profit or cost savings.

It’s your employees who day-to-day are closest to your customers, and it’s your employees who invariably know more than anybody about what needs changing or what ideas will work best in your shops or concessions. With the help of your managers as mentors, you should tap into this valuable potential.

**5 — Infuse:** Developing and mentoring your employees is not a one-off activity, it’s an ongoing process. It’s about infusing a new way of thinking into every employee, so that every action they take, and every decision they make is done at a higher standard, and for the benefit of your customers.

Only by constantly developing your staff, and involving them in your business will you get the very best from them, and give your customers the greatest level of service and value.

### Enterprise Mentor

To help your managers become mentors to your employees, we have created the *Enterprise Mentor™* programme.

*Enterprise Mentor™* is a set of digital mentoring tools and strategies which you can licence to improve the motivation, engagement, productivity and performance of your employees — and at the same time, increase the revenue and profits of your company.

*Enterprise Mentor™* brings the thinking and inspiration of some of the UK’s most successful business leaders directly to your front-line employees and managers. Business leaders who contributed to the development of the programme include consumer champions **Duncan Banatyne** and **Simon Woodroffe** from Dragons’ Den, **Lord Bilimoria** (founder of Cobra Beer), **Lord Harris** (founder of CarpetRight) and **Nick Wheeler** (founder of Charles Tyrwhitt) plus many more leading names from UK industry.

The *Enterprise Mentor™* programme is designed to be used collaboratively by your managers and employees, who embark together on a journey of personal, professional and business development, and where your managers take the lead and facilitate the mentoring and development of your employees.

Using the *5i* approach (involve, instil, inspire, ignite and infuse), *Enterprise Mentor™* helps create a bond and relationship between your managers and employees.

It gives a framework for your employees to learn more about themselves, about your business and your customers.

It also helps your managers understand more about the employees they manage.

By getting your managers to mentor your employees through the programme, you involve your employees at a deeper level in your company, and create an environment which engages and motivates them, and which is proven to lead directly to higher revenues and profits.

The *Enterprise Mentor™* programme is available to license at a company-wide level (through a site-licence) so that every employee and manager in your organisation can receive a world-class business education and personal and professional mentoring experience.

The programme is *also* available for ‘named users only’ so that you can specify precisely who will benefit from the mentoring experience.

To learn more about the *Enterprise Mentor™* programme, what it can do for your retail company, and how you can licence it — simply call us on +44 (0)207 558-801, or send us an email at [info@enterpriseleaders.com](mailto:info@enterpriseleaders.com).