

HRD

Chicago CoLab Workshop Findings
Elevating Engagement: Adopting the Millennial Mindset



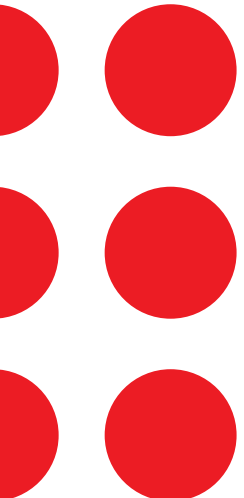
Introduction

HR Leaders are driving transformation in an every-changing world - finding new ways to guide people through the uncertainty and ambiguity that has arisen as a result. As an HR Leader, you have an opportunity to shape the future direction of work, the workforce, and the workplace.

As part of a **pre-HRD Summit/US (March 18-19, 2020) CoLab**, attendees were challenged with two issues: *how to get leaders and frontline managers engaged in employee engagement*, and *the top areas where managers need to focus and specific actions they need to take to keep Millennials engaged*.



Run by Jill Christensen, Employee Engagement Expert/Best-Selling Author/Keynote Speaker, **Co-Lab sessions take groups of people with different perspectives to design the future** through collaboration. The Co-Lab was split into two sessions with Part 1 focusing on the current realities, while Part 2 unleashed attendees to work together to brainstorm solutions.



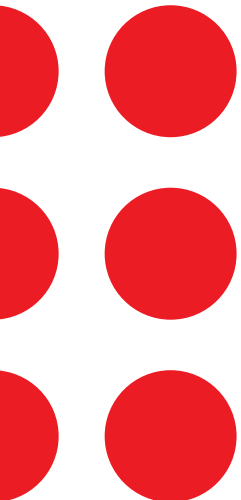
Part 1:

The Current Realities

In Part 1 of the Co-Lab session, Jill laid out the current state of affairs: the employee engagement needle has barely moved in four decades. In spite of the fact that organizations are spending billions of dollars to improve their cultures, and 87% of C-Suite executives say disengagement poses a threat to their bottom line, **dysfunctional business environments still reign supreme.**

In fact, if we look at turnover rates, things are getting worse. For decades turnover hovered around 13% and it's now approaching 20% across all industries. Leading the way? Millennials, who are quitting – on average – every 18 months. Being that this generation will make up 50% of the workforce by the end of 2020, **engaging Millennials must be on the minds of every savvy business and HR leader.**

But what do Millennials want? What is their mindset? What do they value? What do they seek in a workplace? According to Jill, the needs of Millennials are very similar to the needs of other generations of workers, **they are just much more vocal about what they want and will quit if you don't provide it.** Additionally, in order to succeed, organizations must approach employee engagement as a team and take it out of the hands of HR, as frontline managers have the greatest impact on how we do things here (the definition of culture), not HR.



Part 2:

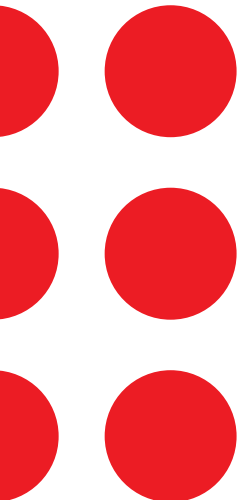
Build a Model for the Future

In Part 2 of the Co-Lab session, **participants broke away into groups that focused on two key themes** and built a model for the future of HR:

- *how to get leaders and frontline managers engaged in employee engagement,*
- *the top areas where managers need to focus and specific actions they need to take to keep Millennials engaged.*

Participants were instructed to take the ideas from Part 1 and elevate them, thinking specifically about where the HR function can transform and develop further.

The findings?

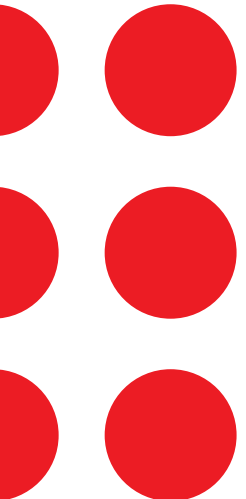


Part 2:

The Findings

HR Owns Employee Engagement in Most Companies, But the Needle Has Only Moved One Point in 30 Years. **How do we get leaders and managers engaged?**

- Find the right business leader in the C-Suite to own it, who has the courage to create an Employee Engagement (EE) KPI. EE needs to be elevated, just like any other critical business goal. This person then engages managers in the journey.
- Raise the visibility of EE by discussing it at the Board level. If a company has an EE KPI, this will ensure it is talked about at that level.
- Dedicate full-time resources to EE to partner with leaders and support managers in their efforts.
- Make EE more explicit to managers. Communicate: EE is your responsibility and this is what we need you to do. Then empower them by providing tools/resources/training to succeed and hold them accountable to the KPI. In the evaluation process, if the KPI is not met, it should impact manager's total compensation.
- Identify what success looks like and raise up examples of managers who 'get it,' in the hopes that other managers will emulate the positive actions/behaviors of their peers.
- Connect EE to a regular business process to keep it top of mind. For instance, it could be on the agenda for the CEO's All-Employee Quarterly Town Hall Meeting on the Monthly Manager Town Hall Meeting.

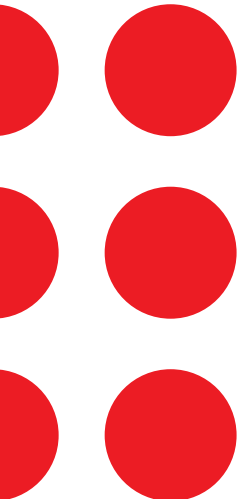


Part 2:

The Findings

Managers Do Not Know Where to Focus and What Actions to Take to Engage Millennials. **Where should managers focus their efforts so they make a difference?**

- **Right Person in the Right Chair:** Managers should only hire a person if he/she is right for the role. It's better to have an empty chair than a wrong employee.
- **Development:** Managers should engage in better dialogues with employees. They must be two-way, transparent and courageous. Then, managers should expose employees to new opportunities, stretch learning assignments, and Leadership Development courses.
- **Performance:** Managers should move to more frequent formal performance reviews, which are a two-way dialogue vs. a one-way readout. How does the employee assess his/her performance? Also, more checkpoints are necessary which are informal.
- **Recognition:** Managers should ask employees how they want to be recognized and then tailor recognition to the individual.
- **Communications:** Managers should be more transparent and authentic, and communicate the why, so people have context. What's in it for the employee should also be communicated.
- **Goal Alignment:** Managers should educate employees on the organization's goals and how what they do impacts the success of the company. In addition to creating individual goals for employees that are aligned with the organization's goals, every employee should have one personal growth goal.



In Conclusion



The role of HR in driving the transformation of organizations from within is integral when considering how businesses can adapt to the ever-changing landscape of the 21st century. The Chicago CoLab session – leading up to the **HRD Summit /US (March 18-19, 2020)** – provided attendees with the opportunity to collaborate on framing the future of the HR function, as well as the organization itself.

The key step for HR leaders going forward will be to **execute**. It is imperative that HR leaders be strategic, courageous, and lead change vs. being dragged back to a purely transactional role. Additionally, in embarking on a transformation project, it is paramount not to work in silos. HR leaders have the ability to bring the various business functions and managers together as a community, **to embed the changes required to succeed in our digital world.**

Thank you for participating in the 2019 Chicago CoLab and we hope you'll join us in Boston in March 2020 as we continue the conversation: <https://www.hrdsummit.us>

Employee Engagement Questions

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HRS Summit/US Questions

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