

SCENE 1: A large FTSE-listed company, headquartered in London, announces its new strategic plan to its employees. They have worked on the CEO's script for the global webinar diligently, practiced the likely Q&As and even primed some willing associates with the first few posted questions. A reasonably high percentage of the staff log on and it all seems to go well. Long-serving employees around the world start messaging each other about the announcements.

A couple days afterwards, a young recruit based in New York is asked what he'd thought of it. It takes him a minute. Finally, he says, "Oh, you mean that old guy in London talking on the video? Oh, it was really boring so I listened to a podcast while I

One size doesn't fit all

finished the project I was doing." Mmmm. Asked if he knew "that old guy" was the Global CEO, he responds with scant interest. "Yeah, I guess."

SCENE 2: The email update from the CEO goes out. It is copied as a post on the shiny new collaboration platform that the IT department is very excited about. It doesn't create a flurry of scathing reviews on Glassdoor. Everyone breathes a sigh of relief and moves on.

A follow up email isn't sent to those who didn't open the first one, or to those who opened it but didn't click on it.

The update message was the same to all parts of the world. It was the same to every job function, seniority and tenure group.

No one had segmented the employee base and identified their fears and desires before the communication was crafted; no one tested different subject lines or calls to actions when it was sent.

No one measured how it had landed, whether anyone paid any attention or bought into the next steps.

Why not?

It is self-evident that business leaders need the engagement of their workforces to succeed. It is a given that it is harder than ever to get employees to pay attention and engage in complex situations.

Recent research by **BRUNSWICK INSIGHT** asked employees what motivates them, what divides them, and most everything in between



And yet we rarely apply even the most basic marketing techniques that we use to engage with our customers to connect with our colleagues. We assume that one size fits all.

When Brunswick surveyed 42,956 adults in 26 markets in 25 languages, we found unsurprisingly that young and old think and feel differently. Post-Brexit and Trump, it also wasn't so astonishing to see that degree holders and those without a degree had radically different positions or that those living in megacities had completely opposing views to those living outside of them. In megacities, 61 percent of respondents thought that globalization was a good thing, while only 41 percent of those living outside of them did.

In emerging markets, 60 percent of respondents thought that globalization was a positive force, only 36 percent of those in developed markets did. Emerging-market respondents are sure that their children will be better off than they are, while those in developed markets are convinced their children will be worse off.

We know these things intuitively. And yet ... Knowing how different employee segments view the world enables us to anticipate how they will react to certain changes and so, communicate appropriately. So why don't we?

Content creation and channel selection by audience segment is not just for external audiences. If we want our employees to respond during critical situations, we have to learn how to communicate with them effectively on a regular basis. It isn't as straightforward as young or old, degree or not, city

or town, developed or emerging market, male or female. These criteria overlay, complicating any effort to predict perceptions.

A 30-to-49-year-old male in an emerging market, from a large city, with a college degree is overwhelmingly positive about the future of his children (with a 50 percent net positive score in response to the question will your children be better or worse off than you are). An 18-to-29-year-old woman, also with a college degree but from a developed market and a small town, is overwhelmingly negative (with a -13 percent score).

Living in a megacity had more impact on opinions than living in a specific market. That's worth keeping in mind if HQ is in a bustling metropolis and branch offices, plants or subsidiaries are not.

Maybe it is time we thought about our employees in the same way that we think about our customers. What makes them tick? What makes them act? What makes them recommend us? Maybe it is time we apply the same rigor to our segmentation, messaging and channel selection for our employees as we already do for our customers.

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CORPORATE BIRTHDAY CARDS

IT'S DEBATABLE HOW much appreciation and engagement companies can engender by sending their workers birthday cards. But it can't hurt, and it costs a lot less than health insurance.

A 75-pack assortment of employee birthday cards costs \$125 from Hallmark Cards, the Kansas City-based greeting cards giant.

A Brunswick Insight survey of 2,000 employees in the US and UK found that 40 percent receive birthday cards from their employers.

That percentage is slightly higher in the US than in the UK: 46 percent versus 35 percent. About 44 percent of all workers surveyed said that they had received a birthday card

from one or more of their colleagues.

Considering that the majority of US workers are employed by small businesses, the most surprising - and depressing - result of the survey might be that nearly 40 percent of those surveyed received no birthday card either from their colleagues or their employers.

MOST EMPLOYEES DON'T WANT TO BE THE BOSS

CHIEF EXECUTIVES COULD be forgiven for thinking that everyone wants their job. The executives who work nearest them, after all, often do aspire to the corner office. Doesn't everybody want to be the boss?

Actually, no. A Brunswick Insight survey of employees around the world - 42,956 of

them - found most of them had no interest in running the show.

The respondents were asked to identify which of seven factors they valued most in a job: pay, security, work-life balance, job enjoyment, status and authority, making a difference, or "doing something you personally enjoy." Of those items, the one that

mattered least to them? Having status or authority.

How to explain that? It could be that the desire for status and authority is something that people harbor secretly, hiding it even from themselves (the survey was anonymous), because hunger for power isn't exactly hailed as a virtue.

It could also be that many in power never hungered for status or authority.

At a time when class divisions are upending elections, and when resentment against the so-called 1 percent remains palpable, status and authority may be all the more unfashionable in some circles. Certainly, many die-hard union members have always shunned any offers of promotions to management (although union campaigns for elected union positions can be vicious).

It may be humbling for some top executives to learn that most

employees don't want their job.

This suggests, after all, that chief executives aren't necessarily their companies' smartest or most talented employees. Rather, they're the smartest and most talented employees who wanted, or anyway agreed to take, the job. But that also means, happily, that talent and brilliance may be found at every level of an organization.

Another interpretation of the survey finding is that rank-and-file workers recognize that status and authority often come with longer hours and possibly endless travel. At a time when top executives are posting online photographs of their visits to offices around the world, the homebodies among their workforce may feel anything but envy. After all, the item that respondents said matters most to them was work-life balance. In second place came job enjoyment. Pay ranked third.

What I personally VALUE most in a job

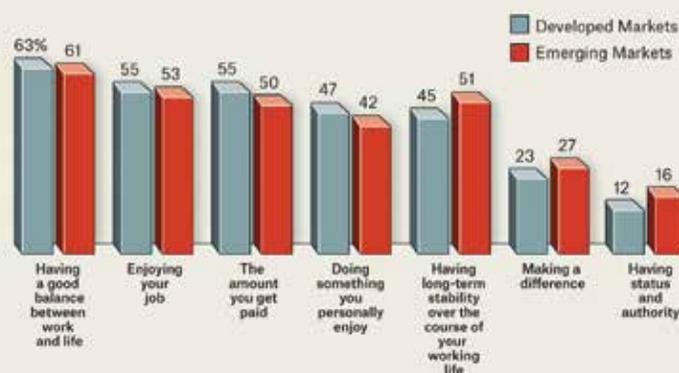


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