

WE

HOW TO
INCREASE
PERFORMANCE
AND PROFITS
THROUGH FULL
ENGAGEMENT

RUDY KARSAN
AND KEVIN KRUSE

Foreword by Tony Hsieh, CEO, Zappos.com

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Introduction

We'd love to get to know you better. Where do you work?

What does your employer do?

No, really, we want you to answer that specific question—*out loud*. It's a little exercise (we know it's dangerously early in a book to be making you work). Just describe out loud—in a sentence or two—what your organization does.

Did you do it?

Okay, here's the reveal. Did you say “we” or “they” when you described what your employer does? Did you say something like “*We* produce widgets for the automotive industry” or “*They* produce widgets for the automotive industry”?

That's what we call the “We Test.”

You can tell a lot about an organization's culture and whether workers are fully engaged in their jobs by how often they use the word *we* as opposed to *they*, *our*, or even *I*.

- Do you say, “I'm the assistant manager on *Jane's* team” or “I am the manager for *our* team?”

- Do you say, “I had the best quarter so far; sales were up 20 percent” or “*Our team* had the best quarter so far; sales were up 20 percent”?

You can even hear the difference when people complain about their jobs.

- A disengaged customer service rep might say, “Work sucks. *They* haven’t filled the open positions yet so I’m handling way too many calls.”
- A fully engaged customer service rep might comment, “Work sucks lately. *Our* recruiting efforts haven’t been very effective so *we’re* handling more than calls than normal.”

The premise of this book is simple but far reaching.

There is nothing more important for a person or an organization than full engagement.

Of course, everybody already knows they should be happy at work. But engagement is different from happiness. Being fully engaged means you are motivated to give the extra effort that advances the goals of your employer. Your job might be tough, and it might be stressful, but when you are fully engaged you *want* to do it; you *want* to go the extra mile.

Does this seem unrealistic, or like something you can only find when you have your dream job? If you’re a recent graduate, you might be thinking, “Heck, I’d just be grateful for any job right now.” If you’re a manager, you might think, “Fully engaged? I’d just like my team to show up on time!”

But how often do you actively think about your own career engagement? If you're a manager, how often do you sit down and think about the engagement of your direct reports?

This book will show you that being fully engaged at work has significant implications on all aspects of your life. As an employee of your company, leader of your team, and vital member of your family and circle of friends, you have a *moral obligation* to get to full engagement, and to fully engage those you lead. Unless of course you just don't care about your health, your marriage, or your kids. But we're getting ahead of ourselves. . . .

This book is based on research from Kenexa, a company that conducts employee engagement and opinion surveys for more than 10 million workers in over 150 countries each year. Surprisingly, while the *levels* of engagement vary greatly around the world, we see great commonality among the *drivers* of employee engagement. But this book isn't just based on cold numbers. It is also rooted in our own passion and personal experiences leading teams in the world of work.

Rudy Karsan is the Chairman and CEO of Kenexa, which he cofounded in 1987. Under his leadership, the company has grown from two employees to more than 2,000 with offices in 20 countries. Kenexa solutions help organizations to both hire the best individual for each job and to craft work environments that maximize employee engagement. Kenexa products and services have touched the lives of more than 150 million people.

Kevin Kruse is a former partner at Kenexa and is currently President of Krū Research, with the mission to discover and share the most effective ways to connect with empowered and engaged patients and health consumers. He has built several successful businesses using the strategy of attracting and

engaging the very best talent. Both Rudy and Kevin remain lifelong learners of leadership and business as they seek to grow their respective companies and maximize the engagement of their teammates.

The Breakdown

We is split into four parts:

Part One, Career-Life, covers the big picture of how work and jobs have changed over time and how critical they are to overall happiness in life. Specifically, we detail how things like compensation, job choice, and retirement security—all factors in work and life satisfaction—dramatically changed during the Industrial Revolution, but are now shifting back to form a new work-life blend. We also explore the psychological concepts of spillover and crossover to reveal the startling impact job satisfaction has on your life, including your weight and health, the intimacy in your marriage, and even your children's behavior at school.

Part Two, The You in We, is written for the individual and suggests ways that you can actively manage your career, including finding your true purpose, ensuring the right cultural fit with your employer, and managing the growth of your career.

Part Three, How Great Leaders Harmonize Teams, details how employees need to be both *engaged* and *aligned* to reach what we call harmonization. It also explores the impact harmonization has on business performance and financial results.

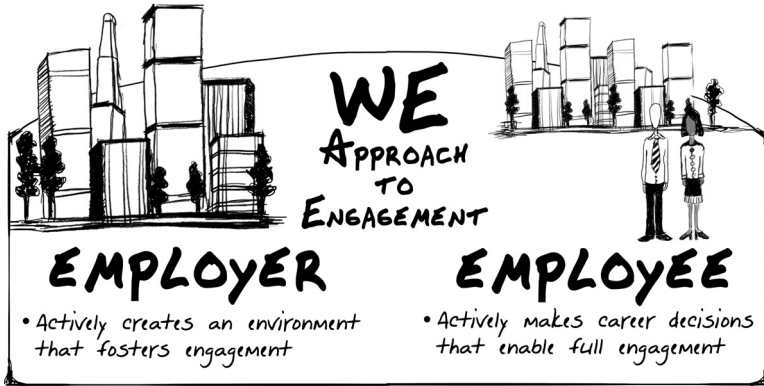
Part Four, Manager's Toolkit, is a tactical guide written for leaders and managers and is based on an analysis of more than 10 million employee surveys. Here, we reveal the unique drivers that will maximize employee engagement and suggest action steps to improve in these vital areas.

Throughout the book, issues are approached from the *We* perspective, where employer and employees are equal partners in the drive to full engagement. Although many books on leadership and culture put the onus of engagement solely on the employer, and many career-focused books focus solely on the employee, without a comprehensive approach our strategies simply won't work. An employee who does everything right will still be disengaged if he is working for a bad manager. Likewise, the best managers can't engage a person who is working in the wrong job or the wrong industry. *We* must come together, as managers and individuals, to understand the importance of being fully engaged at work and to do what is necessary to foster and maintain that engagement.

You'll also notice that unlike other business books, this one is filled with activities, questions, quizzes, links to online videos, and additional content available online. This is because we love books, but also find them incredibly frustrating. Here's what we mean . . .

We are pathological bibliophiles. We don't just love to read, we actually love books. As a young boy, Kevin's father taught him to treat a book like an egg; a book was not to be dropped or tossed and, of course, never crack the binding! Rudy is an avid reader who is psychologically unable to sell his used books. To make room for new books, he gives away his tomes of knowledge to friends and family, but it would feel sacrilegious to him to ever sell one of his books.

However, despite our personal affection for books, we acknowledge their limitations as a form of communication and persuasion. They just don't stack up well anymore compared to television, the Web, or the newest social media platforms. And even the best books are, by their nature, passive. So what we have created here extends beyond the pages of this book.



More than a book, *We* is a ticket to an interactive world that includes:

- Online activities that will yield self-discovery and career insights.
- Access to the authors and others in the *We* community via e-mail and social media channels.
- And lastly, a souvenir—a visual reminder—to the idea that the pursuit of full engagement should be top of mind.

Creating a best-selling book is not enough. If we create a best-selling book that rallies a new community of people who are passionate about getting the most out of work, career, and life, then we will have succeeded. To that end, we look forward to connecting with you soon.

We hope to learn from you and your experiences and to continue to share our work in this area. You can connect with us in the following ways:

Web: www.WeTheBook.com

Web: www.KevinKruse.com

Facebook: [www.facebook.com \KruseAuthor](http://www.facebook.com/KruseAuthor)

Twitter: @Kruse

Twitter: @Kenexa

We hope you enjoy *We* and can't wait to hear from you.

RUDY KARSAN and KEVIN KRUSE

Philadelphia, PA, USA

Summer 2010

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Profits Drop When Your Spouse Kicks the Dog

Do something you love and you will never work a day in your life.

—CONFUCIUS

Activity: Your Thoughts on Work

So what do you think about work? Go ahead, be honest. Tell us what you think by completing Activity 2.1. We won't tell anyone your answers.

Activity 2.1 View of Work

INSTRUCTIONS: Consider each of these five commonplace statements about work. Reflect on how much you agree with the sentiment of the statement and circle the number that most closely matches your level of agreement or disagreement.

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree
"I'm working for the weekend."	1	2	3	4	5
"I work to live, not live to work."	1	2	3	4	5
"Nobody ever lies on their deathbed wishing they had spent more time at work."	1	2	3	4	5
"Thank God it's Friday!"	1	2	3	4	5

(continued)

Activity 2.1 (continued)

	Strongly Disagree		Neutral		Strongly Agree
“I’ll do this job for five or ten years, save my money, then quit and do what I really want to do.”	1	2	3	4	5

Calculate Your Total Score

Instructions: Simply add up all the numbers you circled

= _____

SCORE: If your score is 20 points or higher, boy are we glad you’re reading this book! It means you don’t yet realize just how critical your job is in other areas of your life, and you’re probably not very excited about the job you have now. If your score is between 11 and 19 you are probably like most people; you know you spend a lot of time at work, and you want to like your job, but you still may not realize just how vital work is to your overall life experience. If your total score is less than 10, that’s great. It means you already know that work is an important part of life, and you want to be engaged. It is our hope that the pages to follow will reinforce this view and motivate you to pursue maximum engagement.

All of the statements above reflect a belief that work is separate from the rest of our lives. That we can somehow lock it up or get rid of it on the weekend, or that we can take it off like a pair of muddy shoes before we walk into our homes. But the reality is that even if we are on the job from 9 to 5—or probably far longer—work doesn’t leave us when we leave the office.

Step Right Up!

“Step right up and gather round,” the nineteenth-century traveling medicine man shouted. “Have I got an ointment just for you! And for you and you! The contents of this bottle were made with the venom from 50 rattlesnakes. Sir, rub three drops on your elbows and knees and your joint pain will disappear. Sir, I say Sir! Are you hard of hearing? One drop in each ear will fix you right up. And Madame, for your unique feminine ailments . . .”

Today’s snake oil salesmen have moved the pitch from the back of a wagon to Web sites and infomercials. Many people now pay for books, audio programs, or DVDs to learn some secret that they believe will bring them health, wealth, and love. We all seem to want to lose weight, find a mate, make money, and of course, live happily ever after. And in this chapter, we give you powerful information that can actually help you achieve all this and more. Like the snake oil salesmen, our claims are bold; they will change your life. But what we are offering isn’t snake oil and it doesn’t come in a bottle. It’s not a secret either; it’s been proven in hundreds of rigorous studies. Quite simply, we are selling the idea that *your job matters*. More specifically, how engaged you are at work counts more than you may realize.

But before we prove how essential engagement at work is to you, we use our best carnival barker voice to summon you to step right up and see what’s possible:

- Want to lose weight? Be fully engaged at work.
- Want to live longer? Be fully engaged at work.
- Want a better marriage? Be fully engaged at work.
- Want to be a better parent? Be fully engaged at work.
- Want to achieve inner happiness? Be fully engaged at work.

Hard to believe? Read on.

Roles, Identities, and Work

We don't often pause and ask ourselves, "Who am I?" And if you uttered that question out loud a few times you'd probably be rushed to the nearest hospital. But it's an important question. Your identity, or perceived role in life, is what gives you daily purpose and guides your behaviors. If you view yourself as a loyal friend, you might be more likely to return a friend's call quickly or perhaps help them move their couch upstairs. If you view yourself as a civic-minded activist, you might be more likely to engage in a protest or donate to a politician's re-election campaign.

And, of course, we have more than one identity, more than one role. You might think of yourself as a parent and a spouse, a war veteran and an artist. In fact, before we go any further, consider some of the identities listed in Activity 2.2. This activity will help you gain some insights into your own identity.

Activity 2.2 Importance of Various Role-Identities

(You can also complete this activity online at www.WeTheBook.com)

INSTRUCTIONS:

STEP 1: Put a check mark in column A, next to each role that you identify with.

STEP 2: In column B, rank how important each role that you checked is in your life. For example, if you are a parent and that's most important to you, put the number "1" in column B adjacent to parent, then put "2" in the role that is second in importance, and so on.

STEP 3: Now think about how much time you spend each week in any given role, and write the time estimate in column C. For example, for the worker/employee role just add up how

Activity 2.2 (continued)

much time on average you spend working and on work-related activities. For parent or spouse, put the actual time you spend with your kids or your partner. C. For example, for the worker/employee role just add up how much time on average you spend working and on work-related activities. For parent or spouse, put the actual time you spend with your kids or your partner.		
A	B	C
Identify	Importance	Time per Week
Parent		
Spouse/Mate		
Friend		
Religious Observer		
Worker/Employee		
Son/Daughter		
Relative		
Neighbor		
Student		
In-law		
Group Member		
Athlete		
Hobbyist		
Volunteer		
Caregiver		

Spoiler alert! Make sure to do the above exercise, because we're about to reveal the results of a real-world experiment based on a similar exercise.

This role and ranking exercise is similar to one used in a study by Peggy Thoits, a sociologist at Indiana University.

You might have noticed that the roles listed in Activity 2.2 aren't listed in alphabetical order. They are listed in the order of importance according to Thoits' interviews with 700 working adults. In this study, most of the participants indicated that being a parent was the most important role they held in their lives, spouse was ranked as the second most important role, friend third, and so on. What's most interesting is that people listed "worker" in the fifth position, right below being a religious observer.¹

Think carefully about these questions:

- Did you rank the importance of your roles in a similar manner to others?
- How important is the worker/employee identity to you?
- Did you also rank "worker/employee" in the fifth position, or maybe even lower?

Look at column C where you indicated how much time you spend in each role. Notice a bit of a mismatch between the time spent in each role and its order of importance? We aren't suggesting that they should completely match; being a parent might be the most important role, but your teenage kids certainly don't want you spending 60 hours a week with them. But if you are spending so much more time as a worker than in the other roles, it should be easy to see how one's employment plays a critical part in who you are and how you experience life.

What's in a Name?

Read each statement in Activity 2.3 and indicate whether you agree with it or not.

Activity 2.3 Influences on Identity

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each statement below and indicate whether you agree or disagree.

Who I am today has been shaped by my parents.	Disagree	Agree
Who I am today has been shaped by the places where I have lived.	Disagree	Agree
Who I am today has been shaped by my physical appearance.	Disagree	Agree
Who I am today has been shaped by my job.	Disagree	Agree

INTERPRETATION: Most people who answer these statements agree with the first three. Many don't realize the strong link between our personal identity and the work we do.

We know that our parents have a lot to do with who we are. After all, they're typically the ones to teach us how to walk, how to talk, and directly or indirectly, how to feel about different things and how to react. There is a reason why the stereotypical psychologist always says, "So tell me about your mother."

Most people also readily see how where they were born and raised—or where they've spent the majority of their time—has a large impact on who they are today. Somebody born and raised in Nairobi, Kenya, will have a different outlook on life and make different choices than someone born and raised in London, England. Someone who spent a lifetime in San Francisco is likely to have a worldview different from a person who has lived his or her entire life in Birmingham, Alabama.

Although less obvious, our physical traits may impact our personality and choices. If we think we are unattractive, we may

be socially awkward or less confident, and indeed there could be workplace biases against us. If we are bigger than average or athletically gifted, we may become more sports oriented and competitive during our teen years. There are in fact some jobs that require a certain height, fitness score, or physical capability (e.g., pilot, fire fighter, package delivery).

I sometimes think I was born to live up to my name. How could I be anything else but what I am, having been named Madonna? I would either have ended up a nun or this.

—MADONNA (BORN MADONNA LOUISE CICCONE),

QUOTED IN *ELLE*, 2001

The fourth statement is one where there is less agreement. My identity is shaped by my job? Yes. In fact, over the last century and increasingly over the last 500 years, one's occupation has often been the primary way a person is identified by others.

Your full name reflects your family and cultural heritage. It makes up a part of our identity and is often the source of personal and family pride. Family names, or surnames, only came into use about 700 to 1,000 years ago. Before that they just weren't necessary. One of the most unique parts of one's identity, his or her name, has a variety of origins, including occupation-based roots. With fewer people, and less travel, you pretty much knew everyone in your village or tribe by using just one name. But eventually, the nobility or rulers in the country started adding surnames, followed by the merchants, and eventually even commoners and farmers took surnames, too. With few exceptions, surnames have four origins:

1. Patronymic names—These are names indicating who your father was. The name John Davidson was at one time “John the son of David.” The Irish used Mac for this purpose—Ian

MacCarthy was “Ian the son of Carthy.” The suffix *-iak* in Polish means son of (e.g., Wozniak). In Spanish, *-ez* indicates son of (e.g., Hernandez). Arabic names don’t follow the given name, middle name, family name format and instead are comprised of a whole chain of names showing lineage on the father’s side of the family. The name “Muhammad *bin Nidh’aal bin Akins*” means “Muhammad, son-of-Nidhaal, son-of-Akins.”

2. Location names—Another common practice was to take a name that described where you were from. This could be really local, indicating that you lived on a hill or in a glen, or quite broad, denoting what state or region you are from. Andrew who lives in York became Andrew York. The Chinese surname Chiang refers to a feudal territory and the name Hong is a political district. Naming practices in India vary widely but in Southern India, the name of the village has commonly formed the surname.
3. Trait names—Though not always flattering, many surnames originated from one’s most notable physical trait. If you stood out with red hair you’d likely have been given the name Reid in England, Rousseau in France, or Roth in Germany. Or maybe your stature earned you “Longfellow” or “Petit.” Trait names can also come from personality traits. Part of your Arabic name might be *al-Salam*, which means “the peace-maker” or *al-Hakim*, “the wise.”
4. Occupation names—Historians suggest that occupation-derived surnames came later. Although occupation-based names are still rare in many Eastern cultures, you can find examples of them in China and India, and even Arabic names sometimes have a *nisba* (i.e., a name’s suffix) that refers to an occupation. Of course, occupation-based last names can be seen most frequently in the Western world. This took root

with English names in the Middle Ages. To differentiate among the different Johns in the village, you would refer to one as “John the Baker” and another as “John the Mason.” Table 2.1 shows many common English occupation names.

In a much earlier age of apprenticeships, it would not be uncommon for a blacksmith’s son to become a Smith, or for a banker’s son to become a Banker.

But of course, we’ve long since broken this limited loop where the job indicates the name, and your name (and father) encourages your career choice. Mick Jagger isn’t exactly known for selling fish. But we are about to see that this link between job and identity isn’t completely broken. You, your life, and your job continue to be tightly intertwined.

Just as work intertwines with identity, emotions at work entangle with other areas of your life.

Table 2.1 Common English Occupation Names

Brewster (brewer)
Carter (transported goods)
Chapman (shopkeeper)
Chandler (candlemaker)
Clark (clerk)
Cooper (barrel maker)
Crocker (potter)
Fletchers (maker of bows and arrows)
Jagger (fish peddler)
Mason (bricklayer)
Porter (doorkeeper)
Smith (blacksmith)
Tanner (turns hides into leather)

Spillover and Crossover

Kevin once received what he considers to be the ultimate work compliment. It didn't actually come from a colleague—it came from the wife of one of his team members. She said, "I really want to thank you. You made my marriage better." Now, at the time Kevin didn't know much about the notion of spillover so he was a bit confused and speechless. "Paul used to be such a grump," she continued. "Since going to work for you he's like a new man. I actually like having him around the house now."

You have a bad day at work and come home and kick the dog. That's the classic example of what psychologists call the *spillover effect*. This implies that your work-related emotions spill over into other areas of your life. It's easy to understand and even if you don't have a dog, it's probably an experience with which you're familiar.

Similar to the spillover effect is the crossover effect. That's when one person's emotions or attitudes "crossover" and affect another person. It's not something most of us think about, and is a bit more complicated than the spillover scenario. It refers to what happens when you have a bad day at work, come home, and *your spouse* kicks the dog.

Work and family are the two major domains in most people's lives, but many people think when they go home, they just "leave work at the office." Others watch the final minutes pass just before 5:00 PM, tick tock tick tock, until their official workday ends. But your job cannot be isolated within a defined time slot, separate from the rest of your life. Even if you leave the paperwork on your desk and silence your mobile phone at night, you and your job are still together in surprising ways. Let's take a closer look at spillover and crossover. . . .

Your Job and Your Marriage

In 1989, in northern Iowa, 337 families agreed to take part in a unique study. Reaching far beyond a simple survey or a single experiment, the families agreed to be watched and evaluated over a four-year period of time. Each family was visited twice a year by a field interviewer who gave them questionnaires and guided them through group exercises, which were videotaped for later review. Researchers at Iowa State University undertook this ambitious project as a way to specifically look at the spillover and crossover effect of work-family conflict, and what variables might link the two together.

Many of their conclusions supported prior research about the spillover effect, but researchers were surprised to find that “a spouse’s job exerts as much influence on individual distress levels as does conflict from one’s own job.” In fact, the coefficient showing the relationship between the husband’s work-family conflict level and his psychological state (0.276) was identical to the effect his work-family conflict level had on his wife’s psychological state. This, in turn, had a negative impact on the marriage. We can see these linkages in Figure 2.1.²

Until the late 1990s, nobody had ever studied spillover by observing the daily, routine interactions of couples. Nicole Roberts and Robert Levenson are psychologists at UC Berkeley who decided to not only watch conversations between couples, but also monitor their biometrics to uncover what was happening on a physiological level. They chose police officers and their spouses as their subjects, given the unique stress police experience and the high rate of divorce among police marriages. In addition to completing questionnaires and daily diaries for a month, each couple reported to the Berkeley lab where Robert and Levenson wired them up and invited them to talk to each other about their

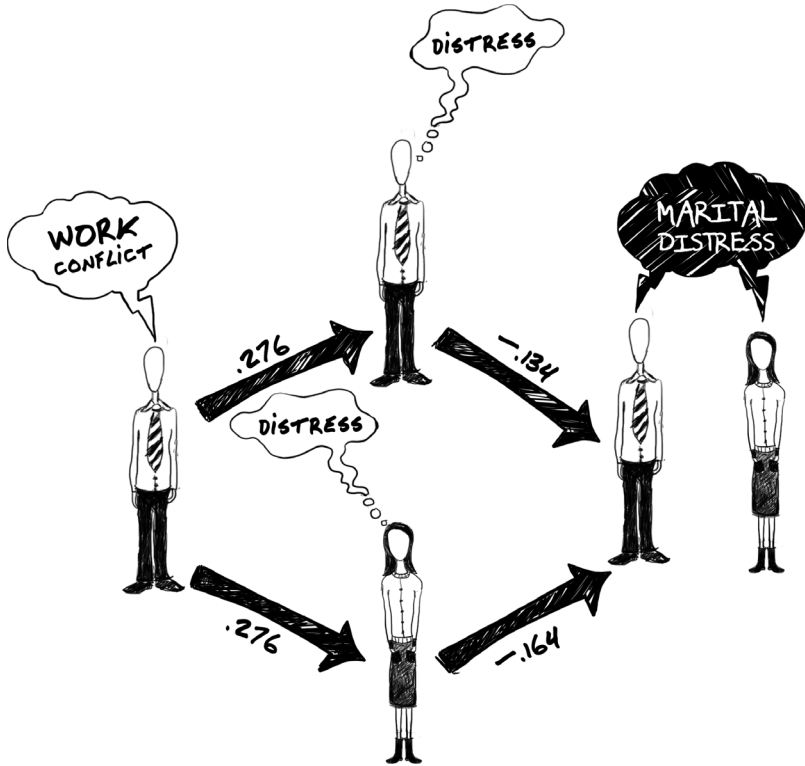


Figure 2.1 Work Conflict Correlates to Marital Distress

day. As the couples talked for 90 minutes, researchers recorded their heart rates and different physiological responses.

Roberts and Levenson found, as expected, that on-the-job stress spilled over into marital relationships and negatively affected both individuals. In fact, they found that mental job stress has a greater impact than physical exhaustion on marital interactions. But the physiological data collected showed precisely how this occurs. In a surprising result, their data showed that on high stress days, police officers exhibited higher cardiovascular

activity, while at the same time having lower somatic, or bodily, activity. High stress workdays caused couples to be amped up on the inside, but cool and passive on the outside. Roberts and Levenson describe the physiological pattern as a “freeze” response associated with fear or defensiveness. And they warned that this freeze during marital conversations is a sign that couples are on a “trajectory toward marital distress and dissolution.”³

A 1985 study confirmed that the inverse was just as true; better work experiences led to a better marriage. Researchers from New York University and the Families and Work Institute surveyed about 500 employees from a U.S. pharmaceutical company and found that having an “enriching job” was directly related to having stronger “marital companionship” (see Figure 2.2). They also

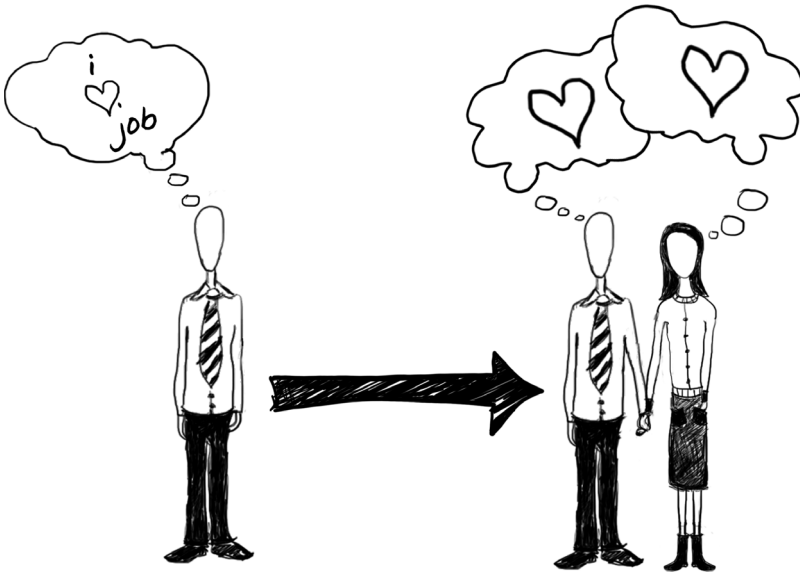


Figure 2.2 Positive Work Emotions Correlate to Marital Companionship

found that workers who had demanding jobs with little managerial support argued more with their spouses. In another example of the crossover effect, the family arguments experienced by the participants in the study actually weren't about time, or watching the kids, or managing the household—they were general arguments unrelated to work in any way, suggesting that work challenges made both partners more argumentative.⁴

Your Job and Your Children

Just as work can help or hurt your marriage, the same spillover and crossover principles impact your relationship with your children. Although many studies support these findings, two in particular—one focused on mothers and the other on fathers—offer insight into a specific chain of events.

Karyl MacEwen and Julian Barling at Queen's University studied 147 female hospital workers, all of whom had at least one child. They had the moms answer questions about job satisfaction, stress, mood, parenting behaviors, and a full 89 questions were used to measure the children's behaviors. Their results confirmed that work experiences impact job satisfaction and mood, which spills over and affects a mother's behavior toward her children, which affects how her child acts at school. Put simply, a mother's work-related mood crosses over to her children's behavior. Figure 2.3 is a simplified model of these linkages.⁵

Years later, a study set out to confirm these phenomena in fathers and for the first time sought an independent evaluator of



Figure 2.3 How Work Mood Crosses Over to Children's Behaviors

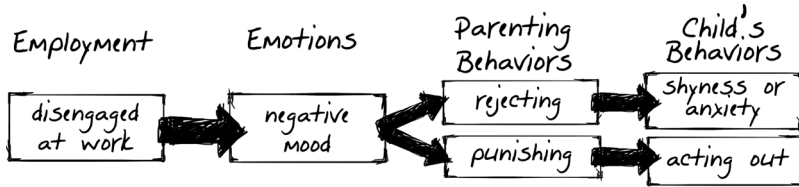


Figure 2.4 Parents' Work Moods Can Lead to Rejection and Punishment of Children

children's behaviors—namely, their teachers. This study looked at 189 dads along with their fourth- or fifth-grade children who were in 25 different classrooms. Fathers completed a questionnaire about their work experiences and mood, and teachers completed questionnaires on the students' behaviors at school. The results from this study once again confirmed that the children's behavior at school was impacted by the work environment of their fathers.

One path from their model details the factors that link job to child. It shows that workers who don't have a lot of control over their job or decision making (i.e., they perceive that they are micromanaged) have overall lower job satisfaction and this spills over into a negative mood, which they then take home with them. The more negative their mood, the more likely they are to punish or reject their children. And the more their kids are punished and rejected, the more likely they are to act out or exhibit shyness. Figure 2.4 shows a simplified version of this path.⁶

Your Job and Your Health

Does your boss have good leadership skills? Rate your boss on the following five specific indicators by completing Activity 2.4.

Activity 2.4 Your Boss as Leader

INSTRUCTIONS: Read each statement about your boss below, and indicate how often it occurs.

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
My boss gives me the information I need.	1	2	3	4
My boss is good at pushing through and carrying out changes.	1	2	3	4
My boss explains goals for our work so that I understand what they mean for my particular part of the task.	1	2	3	4
I have sufficient power in relation to my responsibilities.	1	2	3	4
I am praised by my boss if I have done something well.	1	2	3	4

Believe it or not, those five questions reveal not just the quality of your boss as a leader, but also reveal your risk of being hospitalized from heart disease (the most common cause of death in Western countries). In a 2009 study, researchers showed a direct link between managerial leadership and ischemic heart disease. They studied 3,122 men who lived near Stockholm, Sweden, and asked them to rate their bosses using a 10-question survey (the five questions above were the ones found to be most predictive). They then tracked them for the next 10 years to see which men in the study group wound up hospitalized for a heart-disease related event such as a heart attack or stroke. Using language that

is typically reserved for pharmaceutical trials, the investigators noted a “dose-response relationship,” in which people who rated their bosses poorly but still remained with their employer for four or more years were the most at risk. In summary, the study found that men who worked for effective leaders were about one-third to one-half as likely to be hospitalized from heart disease as those who were dissatisfied with their employers. Or, to put it another way, working for a bad boss might increase your risk of heart attack by 50 percent.⁷

In another study, six researchers in Finland wanted to see if your job could actually kill you. Of course, they probably wouldn’t describe their study that way. They would say they wanted to investigate the links between certain work elements and cholesterol, body mass index (BMI), and cardiovascular mortality (i.e., death from heart attack, stroke, or other heart disease). They began the study in 1973 and surveyed 812 employees and conducted health checks after 5 and 10 years. Then they watched the participants until 2001—27 years from the start of the study—to see who of their subjects died from a cardiac event.

In results published in the esteemed *British Medical Journal*, they revealed that employees who were dissatisfied with their compensation, recognition, and career opportunities had a BMI that was 0.6 higher than those who were satisfied with their rewards. This equates to about an extra five pounds on a person of average height. More significant was the finding that workers who were dissatisfied were also 2.4 times more likely to die from a cardiac event. To put this into perspective, smoking cigarettes makes you 2 to 4 times more likely to develop heart disease. If you think smoking is harmful to your health, how about a bad job?⁸

Your Job and Your Quality of Life

After seeing how your job impacts your relationship and your health, you might assume that your job also impacts your overall quality of life. You'd be right. The link between job satisfaction and life satisfaction has been studied frequently since the mid-1950s, but with a wide range of results. It wasn't until 1989 that researchers published a meta-analysis that looked at results from 34 different studies, with a total sample size of 19,811 workers. This definitive analysis confirmed that there is a strong positive correlation between your job and life satisfaction.⁹

Keep in mind, though, that correlation doesn't necessarily mean causation. So psychologists at Cornell University set out to answer the deeper question: Did job satisfaction cause life satisfaction or was it the other way around? What other factors were at play?

Indeed, they found that the link goes both ways, but the link was stronger in the direction of job satisfaction influencing life satisfaction. As to what *drives* job satisfaction, they looked at a range of factors including hours worked, job tenure, wages paid, effort required, promotion opportunities, and working conditions. But the factors that had a substantial effect on levels of satisfaction were the intrinsic factors, such as having autonomy, utilizing one's strengths, learning new things, and having control over how to get the job done.¹⁰

Believe Us Now?

We've just seen how we all take on multiple roles in life, which combine to form our unique identities. Family and work are two major domains, but too often we don't realize just how important work is in shaping who we are on a day-to-day basis. Because of the psychological notions of spillover and crossover, our feelings

at work impact our behaviors outside of work, thereby impacting our loved ones.

Simply put, you can't box up your job and keep it separate from the rest of your life. It doesn't work that way. Want better health? Get a job that vitalizes you. Want a passionate marriage? Get a job that you love. Want to be happy? Be truly engaged at work.

How do you get engaged at work? We'll share that soon enough. But now that we understand the importance of full engagement to the individual, let's look at how important a fully engaged workforce is to an organization.

Chapter Summary

Profits Drop When Your Spouse Kicks the Dog

(You can download this summary as a one-page PDF at www.WeTheBook.com.)

Spillover is the term psychologists use to describe when one area of your life “spills over” into another area, and *crossover* describes how your emotions and behaviors “cross over” to other people. An abundance of research shows that work factors impact your

- Health
- Marriage
- Children's behavior
- Happiness and quality of life

“Working for a bad boss may be as harmful to your heart as smoking.”

Key Takeaways for Individuals

- Your identity as a worker and feelings about your job have a critical impact on all areas of your life.
- If you want a great life, you need to be fully engaged at work.

Key Takeaways for Managers

- Managers shape the work environment, which drives employee engagement, which in turn spills over into all areas of an employee's life.
- On any given day, your leadership behaviors have a far-reaching impact. You are not a doctor, and yet you have a role in your team members' health. You aren't a marriage counselor, yet you influence your team members' relationships with their spouses. You aren't a teacher, yet you contribute to how your employees' children behave in school.
- Are you living up to that responsibility?

Chapter Bonus Material

Video Interview with Rudy Karsan and Kevin Kruse

You have special access to material only available to readers of this book. Watch the interviews with authors Rudy Karsan and Kevin Kruse as they talk candidly about how their own work experiences have spilled over into other areas of their life for the better, and sometimes for the worse.

(continued)

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1. Go to www.WeTheBook.com
2. Click the “Bonus Material” button/link
3. Click the link that says “Spillover”
4. Enter the password “crossover” (without the quotation marks)

Enjoy your bonus material!

Epilogue

In January of 2010, The Conference Board released a report revealing that only 45 percent of workers in the United States were satisfied with their jobs, which is the lowest level in the 23-year history of the poll. This dissatisfaction is seen across all ages, income levels, and job types. Despite the presence of the Great Recession, their analysis concludes that the decline of job satisfaction is neither cyclical nor correlated to the economy. The downward trend has been steady and steep, representing a 26 percent drop in satisfaction since 1987.¹

This is both a social crisis and a business crisis. Emotions at work, whether positive or negative, spill over to the home and cross over to our spouse, children, and friends. Disengagement is harmful to our physical and mental health. For companies, an engaged workforce leads to higher growth and profits and the difference between an engaged and disengaged workforce can have a dramatic impact in total shareholder value.

People view work as either a *job* with a focus on money, a *career* with a focus on advancement, or a *calling* with a focus on

contribution. We have an innate tendency to exert our knowledge, skills, and talents in ways that increase our self-esteem, self-worth, and happiness. But when our work is viewed as just a job for a paycheck, we cheat ourselves. When we have goals but they consist of stepping stones to career achievement, our engagement goes up, but it's tenuous and shallow. Only when we pursue the Career-Life Bull's-Eye—the overlap of Passion, Purpose, and Pay—will we find our true calling and maximize our engagement.

However, meaning comes from within and from those with whom we interact. A surgeon may be aware of the value of a difficult, life-saving operation, but its meaning is enhanced when a peer asks permission to scrub-in and observe the procedure, as well as when the patient's son thanks the surgeon for saving his father's life. A teacher knows inherently that his work educating children is meaningful and important, but that meaning is made greater by a parent's thank-you note or positive words from the principal. The source of meaning comes from two sources: (1) internal and (2) external.

The external factors, the culture or environment in which we work, is most shaped by our immediate managers, or leaders. What universally drives engagement are leaders who foster growth and development, recognition and appreciation, and trust and confidence. Less universal but also prevalent are the engagement factors of teamwork, communication, future vision, corporate responsibility, and quality.

The downward trend in satisfaction must be reversed, but it can neither be accomplished by individual nor organization alone. Synergy occurs when the worker and the employer come together in pursuit of engagement. The effect is magnified when the purpose and passion of the individual aligns with the core and BHAG of the organization, when the employee is purposeful

about their development and the employer is invested in their growth. The *We* mind-set recognizes that is a shared responsibility with mutual benefits.

When we encounter someone who is disengaged at work we are saddened not over the loss of a single soul, but by the loss of greater potential, the loss to a team, and the impact it has on the individual's family. And when we encounter workers completely engaged in their jobs, and when we hear the infectious enthusiasm in their voices, we are filled with joy knowing their sense of happiness and the impact they are having on those around them.

Your kids, your spouse, your friends, your colleagues—all of us—we need you to find meaning and to be engaged at work. *We* need you to be committed to the engagement and alignment of the workers on your team. *We* need each other to reach our shared goals. *We* need to harmonize our lives and our work.

We.

