

Which is more important:

Engaged
Employees?

or

Satisfied
Employees?



First, let's be clear.

- Employee satisfaction
 - An affective state or reaction to one's job (Locke, 1976; Organ & Near, 1985).
 - Job affect or 'summary feelings' about one's job (Ironson et al., 1989)
- Employee engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2006)
 - *Vigor*: High levels of energy and mental resilience at work.
 - *Dedication*: Strong involvement in one's work and a sense of significance and pride.
 - *Absorption*: Being fully concentrated and happily engrossed in one's work.
 - This is one of a few, very similar conceptualizations that has been empirically validated and statistically separated from other variables.
 - Employee engagement was a specific variable (e.g., Kahn, 1990) long before the term was lifted to describe an entire philosophy or movement involving many aspects of employee motivation, contentment, and performance.

So which is more important?

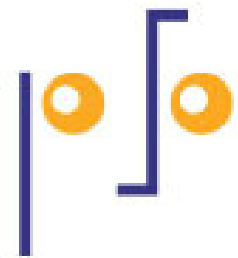
- Both are important! However, engagement is more related to effort, while satisfaction is more related to commitment and stay intentions.
- Which should you focus on (and their separate workplace drivers)? It depends on what's more important for your organization at any given time (e.g., productivity and innovation vs. retention).

Correlations

	Discretionary Effort	Commitment	Stay Intentions
Employee Engagement 1	.49	.62	.53
Employee Engagement 2	.48	.59	.53
Job Satisfaction	.39	.74	.66

N = 574 (54% American, 46% Canadian). All correlations $p < .01$. Employee Engagement 1 and 2 are separate measures of the combined dimensions of employee engagement. Employee Engagement 1 was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006). The remaining variables were measured using the Meaningful Work Inventory® (Fairlie, 2010).

For more information...



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