

Workplace Success Experts Reveal Five Behaviors That Make Employees Essential At Work—And Give Organizations A Competitive Edge

Tabernash, Colorado – January 25, 2011 [Workplace success](#) research has revealed five behaviors that supervisors, coworkers and executives value most. When employees exhibit these behaviors, employers see them as essential to workplace success.

“These five essential behaviors may seem like common sense, but we all know the old adage that common sense isn’t so common,” said Traci Maddox, a senior consultant at Sage Peak Associates, Inc., a consulting business in Colorado that specializes in helping organizations be more successful. “Employees must practice these behaviors throughout their careers, and employers must reinforce and reward them.”

Maddox and Judy Free conducted workplace success research in organizations throughout the United States and documented the results in their book [“The Essential Employee: The Adventures of Carmen Senz.”](#) The book is an engaging story of a young woman experiencing her first six months on the job. Readers can learn and compare their own behaviors to those proven essential in the workplace. The book also outlines a simple framework to help reinforce those essential behaviors.

Employees worth retaining exhibit the essential [work behaviors in the REACH framework](#). “REACH” stands for the following behaviors: **R**esults, **E**nthusiasm, **A**ttitude, **C**ooperation, and **H**onor. Essential employees consistently deliver results that matter. They are enthusiastic about their organization. Essential employees maintain the right attitude regardless of the task. They are cooperative and a positive influence at work. And, perhaps most importantly, essential employees have honor—unquestionable integrity.

Maddox said the sooner organizations or educational institutions identify and reinforce these essential behaviors, the more likely they will become second nature for employees. Therefore, it is critical for teachers and human resource professionals to help students and employees assimilate these behaviors as early as possible.

“It is very worthwhile for organizations to help employees become more essential—because it can lead to greater business success.” said Judy Free. A recent HRM report shows that labor is often an organization’s largest expense—and the Small Business Administration reported employee hiring and retraining can cost up to twice the position’s annual salary.

“Organizations win when they provide a simple framework for employee success—and enrich employee training with supervisory coaching and conversations around the framework,” said Free. Workplace prep programs will be more successful if they focus on behaviors that create essential employees—people worth keeping when the going gets tough.

Essential behaviors can also create business wins with [telework—a growing workplace trend](#). In the federal government, OPM reported that 27 agencies found telework provided morale benefits and increased productivity/performance. Another researcher, Kate Lister, reported that if the eligible people who desire to telework spent half-time telecommuting, it could save companies,

communities, and employees over \$650 billion a year. However, in order to telework effectively, employees must behave in ways that are essential for the organization—even when their boss is not watching.

Academic institutions at the middle school, high school, and college levels are using this important information in their work skills and career prep programs. Organizations have found the REACH framework valuable in professional development and new hire programs. The REACH framework is a simple approach that can be adapted and used as a basis for education, career preparation, performance management, coaching, and workplace learning.

This simple framework can make a big difference to organizations. Gallup reported that only 29% of workers in the USA are actively engaged in their work. They estimated the [cost of disengaged employees](#) in the USA to be over \$300 Billion per year. Their research shows that engaged employees are more productive. The REACH framework increases employee engagement and commitment to doing work that matters to an organization.

“During our research, organizations reported issues in today’s workplace,” said Maddox. The data shows that new employees have issues working in a corporate environment. They have less interpersonal skills and greater expectations of immediate success and promotion. Other, more experienced workers often reach a “ceiling” where interpersonal skills keep them from advancing in their careers. [“The Essential Employee” and the REACH framework can help fix the work skills issues](#) occurring in today’s workplace.

About Sage Peak Associates

[Sage Peak Associates is a small, woman-owned consulting business in Colorado specializing in workplace success.](#) Their professionals speak at organization and academic events, deliver workshops, and provide a variety of teaching tools to support workplace success and workforce development. Products and additional information are available at www.essentialemmployee.com

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Contact

Traci Maddox

970-531-7886

tmaddox@sagepeak.net