



Cycles of Success

A Guide to Employee Engagement, Technology, and Talent Management



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About the Author

Nicole Trapasso has over 28 years of professional HR experience.

As Vice President, HR/OD for The Myers-Briggs Company, she collaborates with the executive management team in strategic planning and partners with the CEO and Board of Directors on forward-thinking initiatives.

Specifically, Nicole is responsible for overseeing and executing strategies for performance management, succession planning, talent acquisition, compensation, employee relations, training and development, coaching, benefits, and payroll administration.

Prior to joining The Myers-Briggs Company in 2001, Nicole was responsible for managing a full spectrum of HR functions for First World Communications.



What is the Talent Management Life Cycle?

There are various models of the talent management life cycle. Some are unique to specific company cultures or industries, while others are more general. They all start from the initial touch points a company has with potential employees and show how, once hired, those employees move through the company. Most models encompass all the phases or steps in employees' career progression.

Among the chief concerns of HR people today are:

1. **Matching candidates to jobs** based on their ability to handle the job-specific challenges they are likely to face.
2. **Finding out what candidates are seeking**—such as ongoing investment in their professional development that will enable them to not only grow but also give back, and opportunities to experience a lot of different things in their career.

When looking at areas for organizational improvement, it can be helpful to map these concerns onto the talent management life cycle model to get a clear picture of where programs can be implemented for employees. The graphic below depicts an example of a talent management life cycle from C2 Research.

One of the most interesting challenges facing HR today is the move from traditional in-office work settings to remote and hybrid workplaces. That change affects every part of the talent management life cycle.

The career path model of 30 years ago is very different from what people expect today from their employment life cycle.

For employees, the new model may mean having a variety of careers that all have a common thread running through them.

For employers, it means looking at how they can meet and develop those people wherever they are in their own employee life cycle.



Meaning & Engagement in Your Workforce

People seek meaning throughout the various stages of their career. At [The Myers-Briggs Company](#), we focus on helping our employees find meaning in their work while identifying and harnessing the specific talents and differences that make each employee unique.

Early in their career, employees may be looking for mentorship and the ability to work on many different, challenging projects.

For employees who actively engage in their development, this continues but takes on different aspects as they grow and gain new skills and competencies or their roles become more complex. Some individuals have goals that extend beyond their current role in the organization and want to grow professionally.

At The Myers-Briggs Company, we're fortunate to have access to and the ability to use our own assessments to help our employees increase their self-awareness and grow skills. Not all organizations have this key competitive advantage.

The clearer employees become about their developmental needs and growth goals, and how they can get those needs and goals met (both inside the workplace and out), the better both they and their employers can keep them challenged, growing, and engaged. This is key to keeping talent committed to their organization.

Ideally, the organization can help meet employees' needs while concurrently meeting its own business goals and talent objectives.

The Myers-Briggs Company is in a unique position: Our mission and vision—based on the goal of helping people around the globe grow—are clearly aligned with the nature of our products and services. For many employees and potential employees, this alignment helps fulfill their personal and professional goals of finding meaning for themselves through their work and giving back to others.

At other organizations, the connection to meaningful work in an employee's day-to-day job might not be as obvious. However, there are a few things you can do as a manager or trainer—in any organization—to help employees discover meaning in the workplace.

If you're working in HR in an organization that does not provide employees with such a clear line of sight into the meaningfulness of the work they do, I have some recommendations for you to consider.

- 1. Identify some current employees who you feel are truly engaged** and find out what drew them to the company initially and what has kept them there. You likely will find some information that validates your assumptions as well as new information that might be eye-opening. Considering the variety of preferences and interests that employees bring to the organization, this feedback can be valuable for HR throughout the various phases of the talent management life cycle.

Something as simple as an online survey (with some type of incentive to participate) or a focus group can provide insight into increasing employee engagement and retention. By fostering discussions about meaningfulness and engagement with a cross-section of your employees, you can help them reaffirm why they joined the company in the first place.

- 2. Once you have collected some trend data, you can share it with employees and managers** by opening up the discussion in the organization. Information on what current employees find meaningful in their work at your company is also extremely powerful for recruitment purposes, enabling you to clearly identify what may draw potential talent to your organization and how you can help retain current employees.

How would you characterize the relationship between the level of meaningfulness in your employees' work and employee engagement?

What do you find meaningful in your work?

How can you help your employees and organization increase the meaningfulness of the work environment?

Assessments & Employee Development

In [this video](#), Sherrie Haynie, Senior Director of Professional Services at The Myers-Briggs Company, discusses how tools such as the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®) assessment can improve employee development within the organization. She also talks about the importance of bridging the gap between the insights gained from assessments and putting those insights into action.

As organizations simultaneously face increasing need to develop their talent and dwindling resources from OD and HR departments, they require a more complete solutions-based approach to growth, productivity, and other challenges.

[The Myers-Briggs Company's Professional Services](#) Solutions Consultants (such as Sherrie Haynie) provide easy, practical methods of using assessments paired with services that solve specific business problems, maximizing ROI for training and development investments.



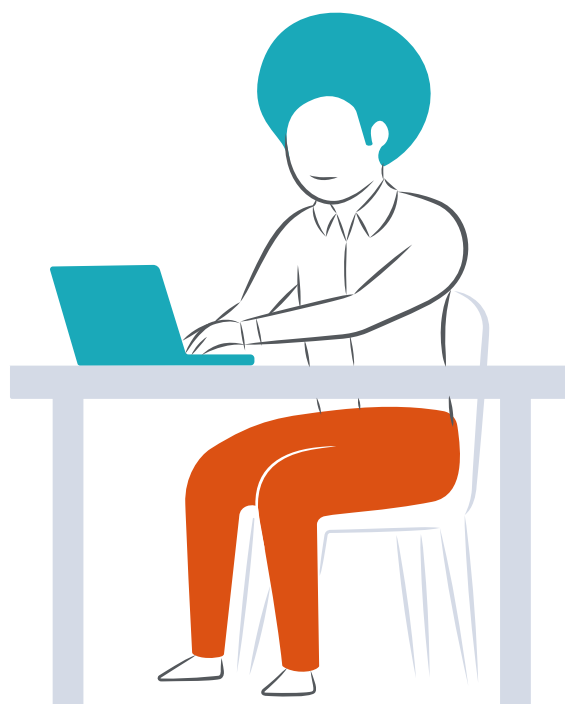
Technology & Engagement in the Workforce

Current technology trends have created tremendous opportunity for engagement in the workplace. For example, at The Myers-Briggs Company, when we were rolling out our talent management system (TMS), we conveyed to employees and management that this wasn't just an investment in support of more efficient ways of handling performance management from an HR perspective—it was also an investment in ourselves as employees, as part of our development, as well as a performance framework to support the company's future.

I've received a lot of positive feedback from employees who are excited about using our TMS and the access they now have to a variety of tools. They can track their progress toward goals and capture and share "recognition" emails from their peers, their manager, and others in cross-functional teams across the organization. They can also track learning milestones and certifications and view not only their job description but also all job descriptions throughout the company.

Tracking progress on company goals is one of the ways that the TMS interactive platform increases employee engagement and brings performance management to a higher level.

The framework prompts more regular dialogue between managers and employees throughout the year, further supporting that engagement. Employees gain insight into their own progress and can take a more active role in their career at The Myers-Briggs Company.



MBTI® & Employee Engagement

MBTI, Motivation & Engagement

Personality assessments like the MBTI tool can be essential tools for engaging employees, because it's new information that's unique to them, but increases self-awareness that can benefit both the employees' work and personal life. Additionally, employees see it as the organization investing in them, which increases engagement.

Specifically for the MBTI assessment and employee engagement, it helps to focus on the two middle letters of an employee's MBTI type. These two letters can tell you what motivates or excites an employee.

Someone with the middle letters ST, for example, loves to get it right and they're motivated by practicality. They want logic, data, and statistics. Knowing this, you can design recognition programs around very specific things that they'd be attracted to, and that's true with each of the four middle letter combinations (ST, NT, NF, SF).

It's also helpful for managers to know this information so that when they're giving feedback to employees, they know what the employees are likely to be most motivated by and the type of feedback that engages them.

The Myers-Briggs Company is an experienced partner who can help you develop the essential areas for improvement or change when it comes to your people development across individuals, teams or organizations. Below are some of the areas where we've helped other organizations and institutions with their people development:

- Career coaching
- Change management programs
- Conflict management programs
- Conflict management skills development
- Cross-cultural team development programs
- Cross-cultural leadership training
- Customized assessment reporting
- Customized team development programs
- Executive coaching
- Facilitation and process consulting
- Hybrid workplace management training
- Inclusive leadership training
- Leadership development programs
- Team building
- People analytics services
- Psychometrics testing services
- Strategic HR consulting
- Team coaching
- Team selection consulting/services

Managing Your Employees for Long-Term Engagement

Employee engagement isn't only about meeting the day-to-day needs of employees—it's also meeting their long-term needs.

Though the market changes often from an employee's market to an employer's market and back again, employees are well aware they have a variety of career options with other potential employers. The information is easily accessible through social technology and digital professional networks, as well as the more traditional job boards.

Focusing on how you can maximize opportunities for your current and future employees is really important—especially for their long-term career goals and your organization's ability to retain its top talent. This not only helps employees feel engaged and grateful that you're investing in their future but also helps HR professionals actively assess their talent pool—and how to take proactive measures to build, engage, and retain its talent.

- What are your employee turnover rates at the 6-month, 12-month, 18-month, 36-month milestones?
- Are employees leaving for opportunities that your organization cannot offer?
- How do these rates compare to those of other companies in your industry?

It's important to have access to and track this trend data so you are able to create or realign strategies to re-engage employees through creative alternatives. And it's key to be aware of potential areas of risk within your talent pool and partner with other leaders in your organization to take proactive measures to curb those risks.

I view HR's role as facilitating conversations about long-term employee engagement with managers (such as within the performance management process). These should be ongoing conversations managers have with their employees rather than annual events. Some managers may need more support than others when it comes to having these conversations.

In addition to managerial skills, personality preferences and interpersonal needs can make a significant difference in how those conversations are being facilitated.

For example, using the FIRO Business® assessment framework, if you have a manager with low Expressed Connection and the employee has medium or high Expressed Connection, the conversation that will satisfy the interpersonal needs of the manager might be much briefer and less in-depth than the one that would satisfy the needs of the employee.

When you add MBTI® personality preferences into the mix—focusing on the potential differences of how people take in information and make decisions—it can also play an important role in how the conversation flows between manager and employee.

Differences or similarities between them will lead to different kinds of communications, yet these conversations are crucial for getting the employee to feel engaged and valued as a long-term member of the organization—and need to happen regularly to create a greater chance for successful outcomes.



Assessments in Talent Management: FIRO[®], CPI[™], & Strong

“There are so many parts of us that form who we are,” says Sherrie Haynie.

“For example, the FIRO Business assessment looks at our interpersonal relationships and we can focus in on how much connection do you want. How much power and authority does someone else need from others?”

“The CPI 260 is a great leadership tool, but provides deep information that’s very different from the MBTI or the FIRO Business assessments. It can really pinpoint where the development opportunities are for high potential individuals or leadership. You can look at benchmark competencies that research has shown are the skills and competencies that other successful leaders have shown. And you can look at your leader’s skills compared to those benchmarks.”

“Additionally, there are organizations (usually larger ones) that have their own internal career center. Especially with advances in technology, there might be certain positions that have been updated and an employee becomes obsolete.”

“Some organizations like this use an interest inventory assessment like the Strong Interest Inventory to help employees reevaluate where their next career move might be in the company. The Strong Interest Inventory can tell employees where they might have an interest that could connect to a career. It shows that employee how they could repackage their skill set to move into a different part of the organization.”

“We have a lot of customers that use the Strong Interest Inventory in that way, because they don’t want to lose valuable employees just because a single job changes.”

The Cost of Ignoring Employee Retention

The reason you see the cost of replacing an employee rising is that HR professionals are being more realistic about the amount of company knowledge that is lost when an employee leaves and the ramp-up time it takes to get someone in and productive. When you consider the investment you're making in a current employee—only to have them move on to another employer—and the fact that it can take six months to get someone else in and trained, that takes quite a toll on the organization. In addition, if the work that the employee was doing still must be completed, your remaining staff may become overworked while trying to cover the vacant position.

And if your company has a high level of employee turnover, it could also start to affect your high-performing employees.

If they continually see employees leaving, they could start questioning their own commitment to the organization and what keeps them there.

In addition, as cited in a recent article in [Forbes](#), when employees leave a company, they can usually look forward to a 10%–20% increase in salary. This is another reason that employees may look to other opportunities and another reason that employee retention is so important.

If we look at what the investment in our employees really is, that figure of 150% to 200% of salary for mid-level employees (up to 400% for high-level or highly specialized employees) isn't so surprising.

That's why when we bring people in we want to make sure we have a really good fit up front—the cost of not getting those things right is extremely high and overtime can prevent the company from being able to achieve its objectives. If it happens frequently, employee turnover becomes a disruptive process. You can't expect managers to operate at the highest levels when they're supporting recruitment for a position on their team. Indeed, investing in an employee and then having that employee leave has an emotional impact on all involved.

The bottom line is that it costs less to retain employees than it does to replace them.

True, it can feel expensive to invest in retention without a direct line to return, but the cost of losing your best employees to another company is always higher.

Developing, Engaging & Retaining Employees

Engaged Employees Are Successful Employees

“What we’ve been finding over the last few years, is when people are successful and comfortable and enjoy what they’re doing, then they’re more engaged as employees,” says Sherrie.

“Employees will give more of themselves at work if they feel their employer is invested in their development. We’ve found, through employee engagement surveys, investing in employees with programs like professional development with personality assessments ultimately increases employee engagement.”

“Then with retention, it’s just a ripple effect. We’ve found that highly engaged employees are more likely to stay with the company. They feel the organization is investing in them, so they want to stay with the organization longer.”

“One thing that I really like to get across when working with organizations is the long-term benefit of investing in their people. When leaders come to us and say they want to make more money, or be more productive, or get more out of their employees, we want to make sure what the leaders understand is that their employees aren’t just dots on a map—these are human beings. And if we develop our employees, they may be a career-long employee for you. You may spend upfront an investment with an employee or employee group, but you’ll reap the benefit of that investment for years to come.”



Technology's Role in Succession Planning

Succession planning is a key part of the talent management life cycle. It is used to identify and develop high-potential employees to fill key leadership positions in the company over time, if and when the need arises. Many organizations recognize that this process is critical.

In a succession planning survey by Human Capital Media Advisory Group, approximately 70% of organizations surveyed reported that they have some sort of succession planning process in place. Yet roughly 62% of those organizations also reported that they do not have enough candidates to meet their needs.

■ **The other 30% of organizations surveyed have no succession plan at all.**

At The Myers-Briggs Company, our philosophy of growing talent from within is part of our succession planning. As the “people development people,” we leverage a variety of learning opportunities, executive coaching, stretch assignments, assessments, and other tools.

■ **Technology has made a positive impact on how organizations implement and manage succession planning—especially making it more efficient for larger organizations.**

For example, various talent management systems (TMSs) offer integrated modules to track succession planning, where HR and select managers can view a number of candidates at various levels of progress, integrated with performance and other key data factors. They can look at historical performance ratings as well as how many people are in which positions and departments within the organization so that they can see where they have gaps in the talent pipeline and identify potential at-risk employees.

Unfortunately, many employees leave their organization because they feel there is nowhere for them to progress to.

Depending on the approach, part of succession planning is making employees aware that opportunities do exist within the organization as the business evolves and grows, especially if the organization promotes from within (even if there's no formal “career ladder” within the organization). You may want to consider publishing periodically the number of staff your company promotes each year.

At The Myers-Briggs Company, we publish the full library of job descriptions in our TMS, which supports succession planning by enabling staff and managers to see at any time what other jobs are potentially available and their qualification requirements.

Employees with an interest in growing their career can look at next-level positions and see how what's expected there might differ from what they're currently doing.

If they are interested in potentially transitioning to another department or job function, they can view those responsibilities as well. Savvy employees will use this kind of information to take steps to gain the skills they need to keep moving forward in their career progression.

Publishing all job descriptions internally enables employees to do their own research and ascertain the next steps required for their professional growth—whether as part of a formal succession planning process or general development. We've found that this relatively straightforward approach of publishing our job description library can have a powerful impact when it comes to succession planning and retention.



ABOUT THE MYERS-BRIGGS COMPANY

In our fast-changing world, your edge lies in harnessing 100 percent of your talent—at work, at home, and everywhere in between.

The Myers-Briggs Company helps organizations worldwide improve teams, develop inspirational leaders, and solve the most perplexing people challenges. We empower individuals to be the best versions of themselves by enriching their understanding of themselves and others.

As a Certified B Corporation®, The Myers-Briggs Company is a force for good.

And we're ready to help you succeed.

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Ready to help yourself or your teams better manage conflict?

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