

Getting engaged

People are the biggest asset of your business and getting the right ones is absolutely critical, says Simon Mundell*.



TEXT: DAVID MAIDA

Recruit for fit. Train for skill. You can teach anyone anything but you will never change who they are, says Simon Mundell, Director of the business development and business coaching company, The Results Group.

To build a team that concentrates on its members' unique abilities, you should focus on people's strengths, not their weaknesses, he says.

"Don't look to train people in the areas they are weak. Remove them from those areas and put them into roles that play to their strengths."

Research shows that just 25% of employees in New Zealand are engaged in their jobs.

"These are the people that go the extra mile. They are the life and soul of the company. They're great to have around. They energise your business."

Mundell recommends paying these engaged employees considerably more than market rates.

"At the end of the day, the company with the best people will win the game. It's that simple."

Unfortunately, 64% of New Zealand workers are disengaged from their jobs.

"They turn up. They go through the motions. They do what they need to do. But they're really just waiting for the weekends. They're not really going the extra mile for you," says Mundell.

But the worst group is the 11% of New Zealand workers who are actively disengaged from their work.

If you have someone who is actively disengaged working for your company, Mundell has only one recommendation: "Free up their future. I say that quite seriously."

"These are the people who will do the bare minimum just to not get fired. They'll drag the people down around them. They'll drag your business down."

Incentive pay will not influence the behaviour of actively disengaged employees. If you have someone who

is actively disengaged working for your company, Mundell has only one recommendation:

"Free up their future. I say that quite seriously."

Mundell says that just because they're not good at your business, it doesn't mean they won't be good somewhere else.

"Your business is far too valuable to have these people dragging it down. Yes, we live in an environment where it's very hard to get rid of them but it's far better going into that process at whatever cost, than it is to have these people being dragged around."

Mundell says a business cannot move on to being a successful company with employees who are actively disengaged. Gallup estimates that disengaged employees cost New Zealand business \$3.7 billion in lost productivity each year.

Positioning employees within an organisation is also a key to success. "Employees should be able to say that at their work they have the opportunity to do what it is they do best – every day. If they don't, then something needs to change." **ib**

*Simon Mundell is Director of the leading New Zealand business development and coaching company The Results Group, which works with around 250 of the fastest growing businesses in the country. This article is based on a seminar presentation for ANZ SME clients called "Thinking Growth". For more information, see www.results.co.nz.