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Workers Crave 'Meaning'

Interviews with over 10,000 workers in the last five years show that companies who fail to create meaning for employees risk business failure, according to corporate psychologists YSC.

The consultancy says that its results show that people do not want to just work in a business that is successful, but want to feel engaged in something worthwhile and that they can make a difference.

"People spend up to one third of their waking lives in the workplace, so asking the fundamental question of what they get out of that time is important," said Gurnek Bains, CEO of YSC.

"When you really talk to people in business you discover layers of attitudes. On the surface people demonstrate 'good citizen' type beliefs, but dig a bit deeper and they are more critical of what they see around them. They don't buy everything they hear and are weary of management fads. They become cynical. However, explore a deeper layer and you will find that they do care about work deeply and want issues that concern them to be tackled. This is what successful businesses are tapping into," he added.

Bains is the author of *Meaning Inc: the blueprint for business success in the 21st century*, which highlights some of the warning signs that leaders should be aware of. These include:

- * Is your company focused on achieving positive change in society as opposed to just servicing its needs?
- * Are your leaders principally focused on creating the conditions for others to flourish?
- * Are your company's values inspiring or are they simply a list that no one pays attention to?
- * Underneath the veneer of good corporate citizenship, are your people genuinely engaged in their work?
- * Is your external image a source of pride for your people?
- * Are you confident that your business can continue to attract talent in tomorrow's world?
- * Do you have sufficient levels of trust to create true alignment in your business?
- * Do you make your employees feel special in any way?

"Those who are unable to align their company to the issues addressed in these questions are those who need to make a significant change and realise the benefits of providing meaning to their people," Bains said.

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