



How to Get Your Employees to Love Your Brand



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by Chip R. Bell

"I don't want my Dollar General store to look like a Dollar General store!" It was the owner's assertive Sunday morning response to a sincere compliment on her immaculate, well-organized store. Her loud echo of pride stood in stark contrast to two other Dollar General stores in the same area, ironically staffed at the register by the store owner, not just an hourly employee.

That is what brand indifference sounds like. She cared about her store but had zero allegiance to the brand over her front door. And what does brand loyalty look like?

Mention Piedmont Airlines to long-time road warriors and you will hear stories of over-the-top employee pride. Even after their "hostile" takeover by US Airways, passengers could spot a former Piedmont flight attendant by their upbeat disposition. I asked one of the purveyors of sunshine how she liked working for USAir. "We are told not to," she whispered as she did a timid reveal, "But I still wear my Piedmont lavalier under my USAir uniform!"

Brand devotion shows up in countless ways. It is employees who fervently defend the organization they front. It is out-of-the-ordinary efforts to polish the experience so the organization “looks good” to those they serve. It is the sporting of logoed objects in settings where a uniform is not expected. And such pride makes a difference. A 2025 Gallup report showed that brand loyal employees were 87% less likely to leave their [company](#). Also, employees who work for companies with strong brands are 1.7 times more likely to act as brand [advocates](#). Here are four secrets wise leaders know bolster brand loyalty by employees.

Meaning: Help Employees Experience the “Why” of Their Work



Mission statements can be a trap. They can seduce leaders into believing that a well-crafted mission statement can effectively communicate the "why" of work, ensuring direction, fostering consistency, and promoting zeal. High-sounding words are often launched with banner, band, and bravado. Some succeed. But most mission statements end up on the break room wall and, like other wallpaper, become invisible and ignored over time.

Allegiance to a brand is born from an unmistakable sense of meaning. People will "salute the company flag" only if they deem it personally meaningful. That sense of significance comes from many sources. It is the stories leaders tell about the organization's folklore. It can come from a line of sight between a worker and the ultimate recipient of their toll. It can emerge from emergencies and calamities, in which the organization becomes a respected star. What are ways you can help every employee know their efforts are meaningful?

Discipline: Ensure Work Has Quality Worth Defending the Pathway for Brand Character

Brand loyalty is most fervently displayed in the worlds of athletics and the military, both characterized by cheers and chants. But the superglue that binds camaraderie and connection is the perpetual focus on regimented standards, adherence to shared protocols, and a deference to mutual patterns shared by a team or unit. The word "discipline" comes from the Latin word meaning "learning." But, in its collective sense, it means "learning together," much like a horse trainer might teach a team of horses to work together. The byproduct of that superglue is a cherishing of the whole as well as its parts.



Organizations that rely on discipline create clarity and minimize confusion through systems, routines, accountability, and reliable follow-through. Such predictability instills collective calm and confidence, helping teams stay focused, aligned, and effective. "Discipline is the soul of an army," wrote George Washington. "It makes small numbers formidable; procures success to the weak, and esteem to all." What steps can you take to help work become as efficient as it is effective, as skilled as it is successful?

Fingerprints: Ensure Employees Know Their Personal Connection with Success



"Give employees a sense of ownership" is a popular motivational mantra. It sounds like a game of "let's pretend you own this company." Employees do not need ownership or a game; they need to know, in a real way, that their work matters to the organization's success. Pride comes with knowing your respected fingerprints are on the organizational masterpiece. And fingerprints are symbols of unique identity.

Gerald Taylor and Raymond Johnson purchased their first supermarket in Stockbridge, Georgia, in 1975, mortgaging their homes to help finance the purchase. They lived their values of honesty, integrity, doing what they say they will do, and treating customers and employees with great respect. Today, Food Depot is an Employee-Owned company with 41 stores that continues to grow by maintaining the belief that you are only as good as your employees. "We are now caretakers of culture," said Taylor. How can you help your employees know they have essential skin in the game?

Echo: Provide Ways for Employees to Get a Perpetual Experience That They Count

"The deepest craving of human nature is the need to be valued." When William James wrote those words, he implied far more than a petition for recognition. The opposite of 'valued' is not 'scorned'. The opposite of valued is indifference. Indifference is the worker whose toil is a cause that yields an effect not known to them. It is effort without the experience of a return. Employee admiration for their brand stems from an internal acknowledgement: "I did this." It is a way for employees to witness their signature on their labor.



In his classic book, *How to Grow People into Self-Starters*, author Thomas K. Connellan uses an analogy to illustrate the power of echo. Imagine an excited bowler rolling the bowling ball toward the pins only to discover there is a curtain halfway down preventing any line of sight with the pins. Or imagine a "supervisor in the mix" shouting, "You have three still standing" after a blind attempt at a strike. The scene telegraphs the bland world of work without an echo—no feedback, no reaction, just toil. What steps are you taking to ensure your employees know there is a result on the other end of their efforts?

"My company made \$12 billion this year, and all I got was this stupid t-shirt they mailed to me. Do you think I'm excited about going to work early Monday morning?" Employee pride in a brand is a lot like family pride. It's the "that's my boy" sentiment as junior rounds third base or a dad's special dance at his daughter's wedding. It comes from a purpose-driven effort in a setting with clear protocols, continual opportunities for involvement, and a way to experience the benefits of one's efforts. Treat employees like they make a difference, and they will.

About Chip Bell



Chip R. Bell is a renowned keynote speaker and the author of several award winning, best-selling books. Global Gurus in 2025 ranked him for the eleventh year in a row in the top dozen keynote speakers in the world on customer experience. He is also a senior advisor with On3.ai, a company that specializes in mobile based, AI-driven field-based learning programs, as well as an instructor with Fuel, Inc. (myfuel.io). He can be reached at www.chipbell.com.