

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2019 FALL FOCUS FORUM

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ENGAGING  
TODAY'S  
TALENT FOR  
TOMORROW'S  
SUCCESS

November 12, 2019 | Blue Bell, PA

Presented by:



## Overview

Employee engagement is more than an initiative. In fact, the current state of the workforce faces complex challenges that, while not all new, are magnified in today’s VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity) environment. Even though there are volumes of studies and white papers describing how engaged and disengaged employees act and interact, there is still poor consensus on strategies to influence engagement.

The statistics are sobering. Deloitte and Harvard Business Review (2018) show that close to \$1 billion in general employee engagement programs was spent in 2017 alone. Gallup (2018) reports disengaged employees costs organizations between \$450 and \$550 billion annually, while poor management and reduced productivity costs companies over \$1 trillion. In fact, with all of the money spent, Gallup (2018) also shows engagement has been flat since 2000, stagnant since 2015, and engagement in the US stands at 32% while only 13% worldwide. As organizations build diversity and global presence, “it is the complexity of the system and cultural interactions of diverse peoples that influences employee satisfaction which, in turn, motivates employees to engage in work” (Johnston, 2018).

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*CCI’s core commitment is to bring human capital leaders together to generate insights that help inform their talent and organizational strategies.*

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On November 12, 2019, CCI Consulting welcomed esteemed panelists and guests to engage in focused discussion on one of the most pressing issues business leaders face today: Engaging Today’s Talent for Tomorrow’s Success. The event brought together top-level executives in HR, L&D, and Talent Management to learn, share, and discuss organizational strategies for engaging across generations as well as share common challenges and opportunities.

## The Facts

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Today, more than 36% of US workers participate in the gig economy with 24% also holding fulltime jobs (Gallup)</li> <li>• By 2027, a majority of US workers will be contractors (Upwork)</li> <li>• Nearly half of post-Millennials are racial or ethnic minorities and by 2055 Asians are projected to become the largest immigrant group, surpassing Hispanics (Pew)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By 2024, the 55+ age group will be the largest among the age groups represented in the workforce (US Dept. of Labor)</li> <li>• About 50% of “retirees” take on a non-traditional path or are re-entering the workforce (bls.gov)</li> <li>• Training and development are core priorities. Younger Millennials and post-Millennials (Gen Z) are less likely to have work experiences before age 21 (Pew)</li> </ul>
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## Meeting Highlights

Adena Johnston, Vice President of Talent Development at CCI, kicked off facilitation by asking panelists to share their interpretation of engagement, thereby inviting a plethora of viewpoints into the room. Mike Higgins, Senior Director of Strategic Talent Development at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP), stated, **“Rather than focusing on engagement, we focus on the employee experience. We see engagement as a report card.”** He went on to explain that CHOP leaders find that deliberately thinking through how employees will feel translates into creating positive environments, and, ultimately, results in a more engaged workforce. When framed in that way, the steps to take often felt more tangible.

Elizabeth Quarello, Senior Director of Human Resources and Operations at Avid Radiopharmaceuticals, shared how her organization engages their employees through creating an environment of psychological safety. They believe that when employees are welcomed, valued, respected, and heard, they can show up authentically and do their best work. **“We make it safe to thrive,”** said Elizabeth.

Mike Higgins (CHOP), and Lorraine Webb, VP of Human Resources and Organizational Development at Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW), brought diverse perspectives and creative ideas for how their organizations have been successful in maintaining high levels of engagement. They shared similar challenges of a large percentage of their respective workforce readying themselves for retirement in concert with a large number of millennials underprepared to assume the responsibilities of key leadership roles. **They asserted the importance of helping employees foster common ground where sharing tacit knowledge is key to building internal capacity.** And, they emphasized that workplace policies such as parental leave, flexible work schedules and other efforts to improve work-life balance benefit employees equally, regardless of demographics.

Panelists also highlighted unique industry challenges which add complexity to their engagement task. Lorraine Webb (PGW) mentioned her challenge to retain top talent due to PGW’s residency clause. With this in mind, PGW’s strategic hiring tactics focus on targeting local talent and creating a culture for them to develop while constantly seeking creative ways to source talent that may mitigate potential turnover risks.

### 2019 FALL FOCUS EXPERT PANEL

**Mike Higgins**

The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

**Elizabeth Quarello**

Avid Radiopharmaceuticals

**Tom Sontag**

University of Pennsylvania

**Peggy Verdi**

Subaru of America

**Lorraine S. Webb**

Philadelphia Gas Works

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*Roles (my job), Relationships (connectedness) and Reality (respect & fairness) are core drivers of employee satisfaction which motivates people to engage in work.*

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## Key Takeaways from Panelists

Although each organization takes a unique approach to engaging and supporting employees at various stages of their career, they found consensus on the following five tips that would resonate with any organization:

### Have Them at Hello

Potential employees form engagement impressions before they submit an application. Experience on the company website and brand reputation go a long way to command and retain attention. Without follow-through from their first day on the job, one's initial impression is lost.

**Diversity is no longer just a response to the exclusionary policies and practices. Today it is creating an inclusive environment as a core employee value proposition.**

- At Subaru, employees are attracted by the Love Promise, and **the company reinforces their community commitment as the way business is done.**
- Avid Radiopharmaceuticals **hosts extended orientation sessions or events** where company history is shared with new hires. They are purposeful to reiterate the value hiring managers saw in new employees and communicate how legacy employees are adding to their work daily.
- University of Pennsylvania reinforced that **regardless of title or level, onboarding is a crucial process to quickly assimilate employees to the culture.** Penn pays close attention to culture and engaging employees around opportunities to grow and collaborate across the colleges and schools as they acclimate to their roles.

### Take a High-Low Approach to Technology

For employees to be engaged, interpersonal relationships are key. Regardless of whether they work on-site or remotely, they must be informed and leverage all platforms (high-tech and low-tech) to enhance communication and collaboration. Tools such as email, text messaging, and teaming/collaborative environments were as important as affinity groups to promote forums for people at all levels, roles and demographics to connect and were easy ways for our panelists to share critical information with their workforce.

**Stand-up and open meetings are low-tech but an effective method for organizations to communicate important information.**

- **“We get text messages from schools when closures are necessary. Why not do the same to share priorities from our CEO?”** (Peggy Verdi, VP of Human Resources and Administration at Subaru)
- At PGW, **affinity group leaders share their needs back with the leadership team**, thus creating reciprocity and increasing the likelihood that they will become ambassadors of the message or change.
- By taking the feedback into consideration, CHOP offers **short form content like one-minute videos**, that employees can watch at their convenience without impeding on their hectic workday.

## Ask the People What They Want

All too often companies rely on assumptions or aggregated data to find the solutions to the engagement puzzle. Our panelists concur that asking employees directly about what would help them to feel more engaged is a helpful information gathering tool and can go a long way to provide ideas that have not been previously considered.

- CHOP leaders asked their nurses, “How can we communicate to you in a way that would be meaningful and effective?” The response “put up a flyer in the rest room,” was shocking. While this way of communicating would pose its own challenges, it expanded their thinking and opened the door to evaluate more options for getting the nurses what they need.
- According to Tom Sontag, Penn learned from their recent employee engagement survey that their staff, especially younger employees, is looking **for career opportunities and development**. As a result, Penn is training their managers to become coaches of their staff and encouraging them to have more individual conversations with their employees about their development.

*“If we never asked the question, they would have implemented costly solutions with incorrect assumptions about their effectiveness and would have been totally off base.”*

Mike Higgins, CHOP

## Give Them the Right Tools and Training

Equip managers with the tools they need to be successful as they navigate unforeseen challenges in this rapidly changing business landscape. Ranging from training to help employees have conversations about delicate issues to addressing retention-focused programs for all types of employees, our panel spoke to the need to think outside of the box and try new and creative initiatives.

- Tom Sontag’s approach: “Give them a problem to solve.” He recalled when he recently assigned a problem to their most junior-level staff member and how eager they were to take on the assignment. “They really sunk their teeth into it,” said Tom. “They saw it as an opportunity, and they were appreciative of having the chance to do something a little bit different from their day-to-day work,” **Penn leaders believe that development goes far beyond training and that employees need to be in the trenches, and get hands-on exposure added to the learning process.**

Our audience highlighted that incidents of mental health are on the rise and employees are now feeling empowered to disclose their status and request the support they need to do their best work. While this is a positive shift, managers are often unprepared to successfully determine when to involve Human Resources or Employee Assistance Programs. They also don’t have a guidebook on effective ways to maintain employee privacy while explaining accommodations to colleagues without being accused of offering preferential treatment.

- **HR is at the forefront of finding and implementing innovative tools to support all populations regardless of status.** PGW addresses issues head-on without compromising the confidentiality required.

## Part Ways Amicably

Whether an employee feels that it's time to navigate their career internally or externally to the organization, their process should be supported appropriately. Managers who have a habit of holding on to their superstar can inadvertently stifle their career and prevent them from benefiting the rest of the organization. If the mindset is "Come spend a portion of your career with us," both employers and employees know that there is a timeframe associated with one's tenure. Then, when it's time to say goodbye, there can be a transparent conversation.

- Subaru's development program, Love What's Next, **engages pre-retirees to take an intentional approach to their role as they begin to consider their journey into retirement.** This approach offers tools and training for an un-tapped demographic that has several years of contribution left.
- Penn's and CHOP's **internal career development programs**, Navigator and PEP, respectively, are designed to promote internal opportunities rather than leaving formal retention programs to chance.
- Avid **promotes supportive language** knowing that departures are still relationships. "We recognize that you are ready to explore an opportunity that would expand your career beyond what we can offer you at this time, but we care about you as a person and desire to set you up for success."

## About the Panelists



### Mike Higgins – Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia

Mike Higgins is a seasoned Human Resources leader with over 20 years’ experience in leadership development, employee/labor relations, performance consulting and executive coaching programs in the Retail, Financial Services and Healthcare industries.

In his current role as the Senior Director of Strategic Talent Management & Learning at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, Mike leads enterprise-wide talent management activities, including leadership, professional skills, career and organizational development, succession planning, performance management and employee engagement for the Hospital’s 15,000 employees.

### Elizabeth Quarello - Avid Radiopharmaceuticals

Elizabeth Quarello (SPHR, SHRM-SCP) is an energetic senior HR leader with over 16 years of diverse experience in fast-paced corporate settings across a variety of industries, including management consulting, architecture, media, and biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. She is a hands-on leader and influencer with a passion for driving organizational change to create positive working cultures that enable organizations and individuals to realize their full potential.



Elizabeth is currently the Senior Director of Human Resources and Operations for Avid Radiopharmaceuticals, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Eli Lilly & Company. In this role, she is responsible for oversight of all HR functions, serves as a key senior leadership member, and oversees operational functions including HSE, compliance, contract administration, facilities management and administration.



### Tom Sontag – University of Pennsylvania

Tom Sontag is the Executive Director, Human Resources at the University of Pennsylvania. In this role, he is responsible for the Learning & Education, HR Communications, Quality of Work Life, and Tuition Benefits functions. Collectively, these provide Tom with the opportunity to pursue his passion for talent development and workforce effectiveness.

Tom has nearly 35 years of experience in training and organizational development with large organizations. Before joining Penn’s Division of Human Resources, Tom held training and organizational effectiveness roles for organizations such as Development Dimensions International (DDI), PNC Financial Services Group, Citizens Bank, Drexel University, NRG Energy, and Covance. He earned a BA in English literature from John Carroll University, an MBA with a focus on human resources and leadership development from Duquesne University, and a Ph.D. in educational leadership from Drexel University. Additionally, he has earned the SPHR and SHRM-SCP certifications.

## Lorraine Webb – Philadelphia Gas Works

Lorraine Webb is a human resources and organization development executive with significant experience in the energy and utility markets. Currently, Ms. Webb is Vice President of Human Resources and Organizational Development for Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) and is responsible for all human resources and organizational development functions including compensation, benefits, recruiting, talent management, wellness, EEO, EAP, HRIS systems, learning and development.



Ms. Webb and her team have played a pivotal role of building a talent management program and succession planning process in the face of exiting baby boomers, while effectively managing significant challenges in terms of internal and external constraints.



## Peggy Verdi – Subaru of America

Peggy Verdi is a dynamic Human Resources executive with nearly 35 years of experience in HR strategy, change management, organizational design, executive coaching, team effectiveness, and talent assessment, development and management.

Peggy currently holds the position of Vice President, Human Resources and Administration (CHRO) at Subaru of America, Inc., overseeing all aspects of human resources and corporate facilities & services, its practices, and operations in order to meet the needs of the constantly evolving business.

Prior to joining Subaru, Peggy served as Chief Human Resources Officer at BAYADA Home Health Care and as Executive Director, Human Resources Business Partner/Change Planning at Bristol-Myers Squibb, a leading manufacturer of pharmaceuticals and biologics.

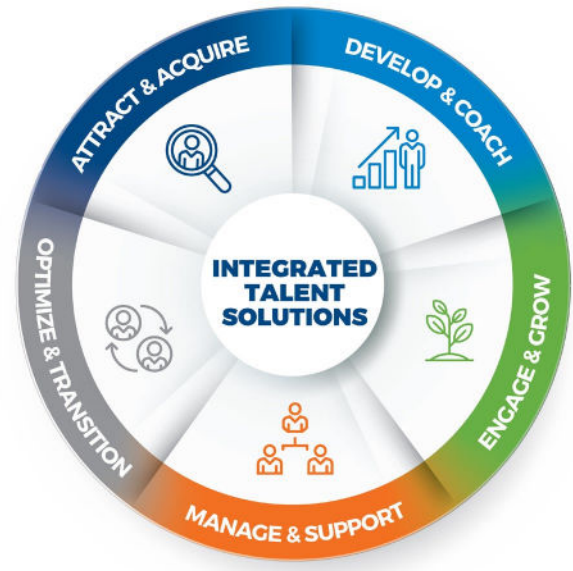


## About CCI Consulting

We believe people are the key to an organization's competitive advantage. Our mission is to help organizations leverage the full potential of their people and navigate the ever-changing world of work.

We partner with clients to:

- **Attract and retain** the right people to achieve business goals
- Enable leaders and teams to **elevate engagement, performance, and resiliency**
- Enhance the capacity and capability of **HR operations and strategies**
- Address the constantly evolving talent needs through **career development, management, and transition**



We help organizations build

***Resilience, Readiness, and Results.***

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