

***Build It: The Rebel Playbook for World-Class Employee Engagement***  
**Glenn Elliott and Debra Corey**

## SYNOPSIS

According to *Build It*, when it comes to engaging employees, the status quo has failed. The book contends that today's organizations must rebel against standard practices to build a culture of engagement that creates competitive advantage.

The book starts with a business case for employee engagement, which is similar to ones found in other books on this topic. After sharing a few statistics on engagement's impact on various organizational outcomes, the authors point out that it all boils down to this: "Treating people better gets better results."

*Build It* defines employee engagement as 1) understanding and believing in the organization's direction; 2) understanding how your role contributes to the organization's purpose, and; 3) genuinely wanting the organization to succeed.

Most of the book centers on a 10-part model to help identify and improve the keys to employee engagement. The authors recommend targeting whichever areas you can act on the fastest and with the biggest impact. The first seven elements are what create the "bridge" between your employees to your organization, while the last three serve as important "rocks" that provide a steady base to build on:

- |                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Open & Honest Communication | 6. Learning       |
| 2. Purpose, Mission & Values   | 7. Recognition    |
| 3. Leadership                  | 8. Pay & Benefits |
| 4. Management                  | 9. Workspace      |
| 5. Job Design                  | 10. Wellbeing     |

For each element, *Build It* offers an overview and outcomes to strive for. Most of the book's implementation ideas come from a series of case studies, or "plays," featuring "corporate rebels" from organizations of all types and sizes who have successfully activated one of the 10 engagement levers.

The authors' perspectives give the book color and balance. Elliot, an entrepreneur and CEO, candidly shares his missteps and insights from his own company's engagement journey, while Corey, a former HR executive at Gap and Honeywell, focuses on practical tips and approaches.

*Build It* is "a guide, not a manual." It provides a lens through which to view employee engagement, along with inspiration and ideas for tackling each piece of the 10-part model. While the book is an enjoyable read, its chapter highlights and well-organized case studies also make it a useful reference tool. The book concludes with information on how to access additional case studies and templates from the authors, as well as ways to connect with other readers who want to start an employee engagement "rebellion" in their organizations.

*Review by Keith Cucuzza, Bridge Consulting*

## SAMPLE LEARNINGS

With cultural and technological changes come new leadership requirements. *Build It's* authors surveyed 350 Millennials to understand what they expect from leaders now.

The study identified 10 things today's great leaders do:

- Own and live the company values
- Communicate openly and early
- Inspire people to reach higher
- Own their mistakes
- Recognize big wins, small wins, and hard work
- Trust people
- Make the right decision, not the popular decision
- Add value to their teams, helping them succeed
- Have the courage to be naked and visible
- Take care of people

Fundamentally, these practices build *trust*, which is necessary for engagement. It should all start with a "Rebel CEO," who ideally demonstrates these 10 practices consistently—and recognizes others for doing the same.