



the monthly croak

As the [Year of the Frog](#) draws to a close we thought we should start the time old tradition of a regular newsletter. Our aim is to provide you with up to date information on employee engagement and other associated topics. We hope to provide you with articles that are relevant and useful in your business. If you have any topics or ideas you would like to be included in our next newsletter please [email us](#) with your feedback.

The team at Kissing Frogs wish you all a happy holiday season. We hope you have an opportunity to spend time with loved ones, get out in the sun shine and be merry.

employee engagement trends in the UK

[YouGov](#) recently revealed the results of a survey conducted with nearly 23,600 directors, managers and employees in October 2008. The survey found further evidence of the positive effect engagement has over an organisation's performance.

They found that nearly a third of the UK's senior leaders see a fully engaged workforce as one of the most critical factors in their organisation's success.

The survey was conducted in anticipation of the launch of the [MacLeod Review](#), a UK Government top-level inquiry into how employee engagement can help British industry improve performance and weather the economic challenges it faces.

The survey also found that nine out of ten board members plan to maintain or increase spending on employee engagement in the coming year.

doing more for less

As times get tougher organisations are needing to do more with less. Research which was recently conducted by the 40 year-old [Institute for Corporate Productivity \(i4cp\)](#) (the world's largest private network of corporations focused on improving workforce productivity) has shown that the most productive organizations further outstripped average in four areas:

- **Culture:** 79% of the most productive organizations say that, to a high or very high degree, the cultures of their organizations help raise employee productivity.
- **Leadership:** 76% of highly productive companies said that, to a high or very high extent, leadership in their companies raises productivity.
- **Employee engagement:** 59% of highly productive organizations use engagement practices to a high or very high extent. Engagement means that workers are mentally and emotionally invested in their work and in contributing to their employer's success.
- **Employee health/wellness programs:** Although it could be an anomaly, "People like to work for organizations that send strong signals that they care for their employees. These particular programs may be sending those signals more than most other types of initiatives do"

cheap, easy & effective ways to recognise your employees

If you get creative, great employee incentive ideas don't need to take a chunk out of your budget. Improve employee loyalty and increase profitability with simple communications, here are a few suggestions to get you started:

A greeting card. Leave a greeting card on the employee's desk with a simple message about how they're doing a great job, or thanks for finishing a report on a tight deadline.

A simple 'thank you.' Call the employee into your office, or stop by their work area to say 'thank you' for something great they've done recently.

A small gift card for a lunch, enough to bring a friend. It doesn't have to be to a fancy restaurant, just a little something that says thank you and enjoy lunch with a friend on the company's tab.

A free half-day. Everyone likes to spend more time at home, or at least away from the office. So, let an employee know they've been doing a great job and they can take off early this Friday afternoon.

Some chocolate. Enough said!!!

tips for creating & sustaining employee engagement in your organisation

Let's face it, employees are not just humans 'doing;' they're human beings. Today's managers should make it a priority to get to know them so that they, in turn, can provide whatever's needed to keep their teams fully engaged in what they do. This creates wins for everyone. With that in mind, here are the first half of a set of nine management tips for creating and sustaining employee engagement (five this month, four more next month!):

- 1) Let go of any negative opinions you may have about your employees.**
Approach each of them as a source of unique knowledge with something valuable to contribute to the company. Remember that you are co-creating the achievement of a vision with them.
- 2) Make sure employees have everything they need to do their jobs.**
Remember when you started a new school year and you prepared by getting all new school supplies? Why not build just such an opportunity into your department simply by asking each staff member, or the team as a whole, "Do you have everything you need to be as competent as you can be?" Remember, just as marketplace and customer needs change daily, so do your employees' needs change.
- 3) Clearly communicate what's expected of employees, what the company values and vision are, and how the company defines success.**
Employees can't perform well or be productive if they don't clearly know what it is they're there to do – and the part they play in the overall success of the company. Be sure to communicate your expectations - and to do it often.
- 4) Get to know your employees.**
Especially their goals, their stressors, what excites them and how they each define 'success.' We do not suggest you pry too deeply or start 'counselling' your team members. What we do suggest is that you show an interest in their wellbeing and that, when appropriate, you do what it takes to enable them to feel more fulfilled and better balanced.
- 5) Make sure they are trained - and retrained - in problem solving and conflict resolution skills.**
These critical skills will help them interact better with you, their teammates, customers and suppliers. It's common sense - better communications reduce stress and increase positive outcomes.

Ultimately, you must keep in mind that employees are a company's greatest assets. Their collective ideas, feedback and enthusiasm for what they do can help your business grow and succeed.

becoming the boiled frog

Adapted from Lloyd Fielder, DC

There used to be an experiment in high school, where they would drop a frog into a pot of extremely hot water to test the frog's nervous system, and see if the frog was smart enough to jump out. It always did. Then they would drop the same frog into a pot of room temperature water where it inevitably just stayed and swam, unaware and seemingly unaffected by its surroundings. Lastly, they placed a burner under the pot and turned it on, slowly increasing the temperature one degree per minute. The frog continued to just swim around without noticing what was happening. The water became hotter and hotter.....and the frog eventually died. Despite the fact that the frog was literally being boiled, it never once tried to escape from certain death. It never even noticed the precarious situation it was in.

This cruel experiment is no longer done. However, it can provide you with excellent information about how you can assess your own health. Because the temperature change was slow, the frog didn't notice the pain or discomfort of being boiled. The frog died slowly, and never noticed the urgent need to escape certain death. Unfortunately, there is a possibility you are like those frogs. Everyday we are subjected to stress, pressure and unhealthy lifestyles. Take this time over the holidays to consider whether you (or your organisation) has become a boiled frog, not noticing the changes in temperate until it is too late.

Don't forget if you want to take your corporate temperature the stress free way give Kissing Frogs a call!

don't just cut costs

A study of U.S. firms from 1987 to 1992; found that two-thirds of the companies that used cost cutting as their primary means of survival during the last major downturn failed to show profitable revenue growth during the following five year period. Forward thinking initiatives that concentrate on lowering an organization's ongoing cost structure are more effective than blanket budget cuts.

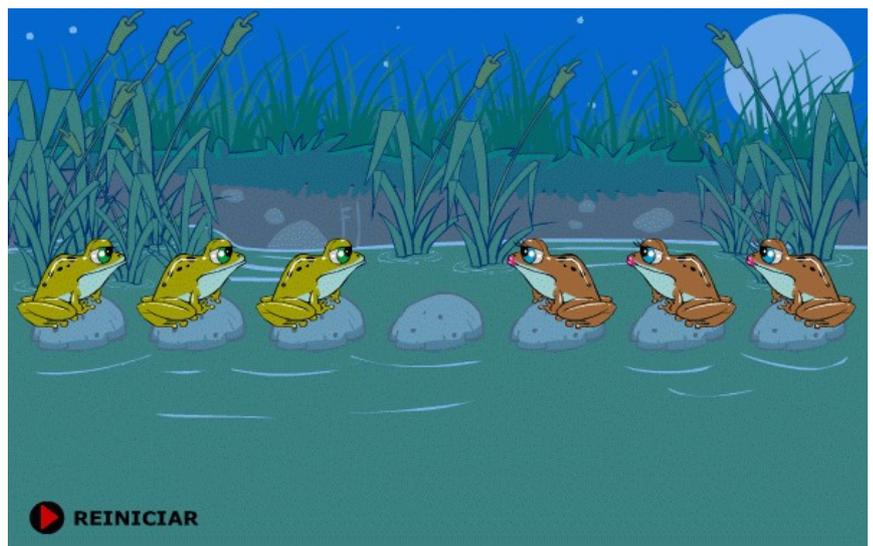
We would like to extend a big thank you to those involved in the recent redesign of our [website](#).

Thanks to the fantastic team at [Hot Pajama Productions](#) & Stephen our Web administrator from [TaGu](#).

Check it out we would love to receive your [feedback!](#)

leaping frogs for wine

This is a logic puzzle. You are faced with some frogs sitting in positions as shown. The idea is to swap the positions of the frogs over by following some simple rules: Girly (brown) frogs can only move to the right. The Boy (green) frogs can only move to the left. Frogs can either slide into an adjacent empty position, or can hop over one (and only one) frog into the empty space on the other side. [Click here](#) to go to an online version!



The first person to [email us](#) with the right sequence of moves wins a bottle of [Greystone Waipara's](#) award winning Riesling.