



SILVER ROSE
CHANGE YOUR FOCUS; ENGAGE YOUR TEAM

Visible Progress = Greater Employee Engagement

I recall an afternoon when I was very discouraged with my work. I looked at the accounts receivables and they weren't high enough. I looked at the engagements I'd booked and there were too few. Knowing that the Law of Attraction says, "You get more of what you focus on," I determined to pull myself out of this self-defeating funk before I made things worse.

What worked was to re-shift my focus onto the things I'd accomplished: my blog that had been going strong since 2002 (before they were even called blogs), a book I had written and published, the number of conferences at which I had spoken and the number of referrals and repeat clients I enjoy. Once I could clearly see my progress, I became re-motivated to keep going.

Therefore, when I read the book **The Progress Principle**, it came as no surprise to learn from authors Teresa Amabile and Steven Kramer that after extensive research, they learned what motivates people: "the ability to show progress on a daily basis."

Progress is encouraging; lack of progress (perceived or real) is discouraging.



What are you measuring at work: progress or lack of progress? When you meet with your boss, do you start the conversation as if you're in a confessional and have to reveal all the ways you've "sinned" by not being on track?

When you have meetings with your direct reports, is the conversation primarily focused on the progress being made or do you use it as an opportunity to point out all the areas where they are lagging behind?

The response of many leaders to the above is, "What are you saying, Silver? I should ignore it when they are behind in their work?" And of course, the answer to that is "No;" we all need to be held accountable. Having said that, it is imperative that we shift the focus. Instead of using the traditional 80/20-feedback model—focusing 80% of your feedback on what's *not* working and 20% on what *is*—why not flip it to 20/80? Spending 20% of your time discussing what's not progressing fast enough and the balance focusing on the progress being made.

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I work with the Solid Waste Department of a city. One of the Supervisors inherited a mess: there were over 50 commercial clients whose sites needed to be cleaned up and the division was way behind on the project. The customers were not happy.

When I walked into this Supervisor's office, I noticed a map with yellow Post-its on various spots. I asked him about it and he told me that they had started out with 50 Post-its representing each of the sites that needed cleanup. As they completed each one, the Post-it was removed. He reports that it is very encouraging and energizing to him and to his team to see this visual representation of progress.

What can you do that is similar? If you are an independent contributor, what kind of visual representation could you use to show the progress of your work? If you are in a leadership role, how can you do this for your team?

The more progress you can show, the more you and your team will be engaged in the work. And that will pay for itself ten-fold in productivity.

*Silver Rose is an Employee Engagement Thought Leader who provides organizations with strategies for: (1) **re-energizing** employees; (2) increasing **profitability**; and (3) **freeing leadership** from the necessity of micro-managing results.*

For information on having Silver work with your company on re-energizing your employee
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