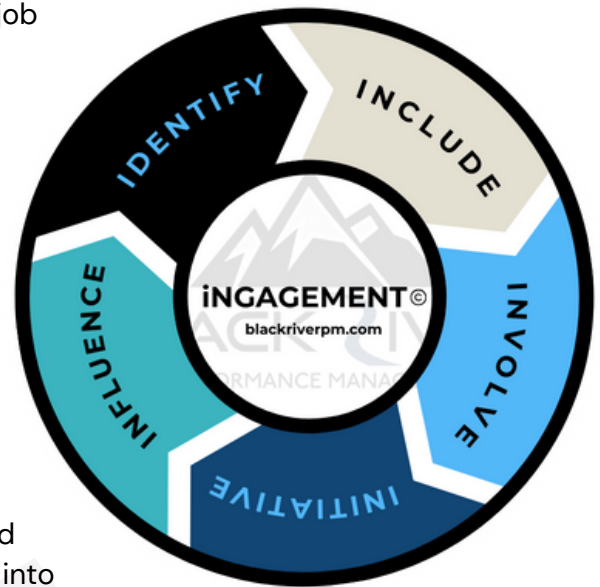


The 5 Phases of the iNGAGEMENT© Model

The **iNGAGEMENT Model**© is a comprehensive framework centered on five critical factors that foster high-quality employee engagement. By focusing on these core elements, the model helps organizations create a thriving workplace culture that promotes motivation, productivity, and resilience. This approach not only enhances individual well-being and job satisfaction but also strengthens team performance and ensures sustainable organizational success.

The **iNGAGEMENT Model**© provides actionable strategies for cultivating engaged and high-performing teams, building a robust foundation for long-term growth and adaptability.



1. **INCLUDE** – Setting the Foundation

“People support what they help create.”

Common Pitfall: Leaders often try to manage and command processes, such as delegating, instead of bringing the team into the planning and decision-making processes.

- Ensure every person is included in the process from the start.
- Share the purpose and opportunities for involvement early.
- Example: If planning an event, don’t just inform your team about it—include them in shaping it.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Who needs to be at the table?
- How can I make sure they feel valued from the beginning?

2. **INVOLVE** – Creating Buy-In & Ownership

“Engagement increases when people are given real responsibility.”

Common Pitfall: Leaders assume too much responsibility, leading to disengagement. Instead, be a facilitator, not a micromanager.

- Encourage active participation through tasks and decision-making.
- Example: If planning an event, don’t just inform your team about it—involve them in establishing the steps, roles, responsibilities, & timelines.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Who will champion the different aspects?
- Am I allowing space for others to lead?

3. INITIATIVE – Encouraging Action & Investment

“When people invest their time and energy, their commitment grows.”

Common Pitfall: Despite best intentions, leaders can be either absent or meddlesome. Think about a rubber band: too much pressure (support), and it fails; too little pressure, it fails.

- Support team members as they take initiative and develop solutions.
- Remove barriers that slow progress but allow autonomy.
- Example: A marketing team that has creative freedom will be far more engaged than one that has to wait for approval on every small decision.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Are my team members empowered to take action?
- Am I removing obstacles or creating obstacles?

4. INFLUENCE – Fostering Peer-to-Peer Accountability

“Peers have more influence over each other than leaders.”

Common Pitfall: The leader assumes the role of conflict mediator (*savior*) instead of empowering the team to resolve their challenges.

- When team members are committed, they naturally begin influencing each other.
- Peer accountability is stronger than top-down enforcement.
- Example: Instead of the leader calling out missed deadlines, team members support and hold each other accountable.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Are team members influencing each other positively?
- How can I support a culture where accountability is shared?

5. IDENTIFY – Building Lasting Commitment & Culture

“When people identify with a team, they go beyond participation—they become advocates.”

Common Pitfall: Leaders assume that by providing branded goods, recipients will have higher levels of commitment to the organization. Swag ≠ identity

- Engagement is at its peak when people see themselves as part of something bigger.
- A strong sense of identity leads to commitment beyond the task at hand.
- Example: Employees who proudly wear company swag outside of work vs. those who see it as just a job.

KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Do people feel a true sense of belonging in this group?
- Are we fostering a culture that people are proud to be part of?

To learn more about this and other Black River models and practices, visit:

- > <https://blackriverpm.com>
- > <https://blackriverpm.com/models>



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