



ALL THE  
SOARINGS OF MY  
MIND BEGIN IN MY  
BLOOD”

—Rainer Maria Rilke

### THE TELL-TALE SIGNS OF AN UNHAPPY EMPLOYEE

A fully engaged team is more productive. So how do you know if they are fully engaged? And what do you do if they aren't? Graham Jenkins of The Executive Connection offers his advice.

It's up to a manager to check on staff morale. It can be as simple as buying an employee lunch or a coffee and asking them how things are going; or it could be something a little more structured like one-on-one meetings or huddles with the team. The strength of the relationship between boss and worker is critical to having them fully engaged and staying on board.

During these "check-ins", look out for red flags and be ready to take action. You can quickly nip problems in the bud or get someone back on the rails before they breed bad morale.

When you see these signs, how do you keep up morale? Monetary rewards are always welcome, but employees stay because they feel appreciated for what they are doing. "It is a basic condition of human

behaviour and psychology that many business leaders often forget: people are driven as much or more by intrinsic meaning as they are by extrinsic rewards," says Anthony Tjan, CEO of venture capital firm Cue Ball.

Say thank you for good work. Give considered and honest feedback, and respond to employees when they raise issues or concerns. Job security boosts morale, so if an uncertain period comes to an end, tell your workers the company is in good shape and their contribution is important. Keep offering development and training opportunities to maximize staff engagement.

Happy and engaged employees create productive companies. With attention, encouragement and open communication, you will find that your staff will stay put and help the business grow.

### NEW PLAYER IN THE CORPORATE DATA MARKET

Corporate credit information will be more accessible and affordable for small businesses as a new player enters the market to compete with Dun & Bradstreet and Veda Advantage. CreditorWatch Express has secured a lucrative contract with the Australian Securities and Investments Commission (ASIC) to provide information to consumers at a rate 30 percent cheaper than competing offerings.

Managing director Colin Porter says credit and ASIC corporate information is vital for small businesses trying to assess potential debtors and manage their cashflow. "Now that CreditorWatch has access to the identical ASIC information that Dun & Bradstreet provides, we are determined to compete head-to-head with them by bringing real price competition and transparency into the market and shake up the industry."

It's more important now than ever before to know who your customers are, Porter says. "Small businesses need to spend five minutes at the beginning of any new relationship to do a background check on potential customers. In the long run, it's protecting your business from bad debt."

Traditionally, businesses only seek out ASIC information after a customer has bolted or left them in the red. But if you do your due diligence before the relationship gets that far, you could save yourself significant time and money in the long run.

CreditorWatch Express offers a single current company extract (giving you all registered business details and any charges sitting over the company) for \$16.90. "This is petty cash in the scheme of things," Porter says. "It's worth it if you consider the money you could lose."

CreditorWatch is a tool for small business to manage and monitor their debtors. With thousands of members, it is fast becoming a valuable information service for small businesses, who can report bad debtors and receive alerts when businesses they deal with are reported by other CreditorWatch members.

Find out more at [www.creditorwatch.com.au](http://www.creditorwatch.com.au)

#### Fast Fact

**64 PERCENT**  
OF AUSTRALIAN SMEs  
use internet-enabled  
3G MOBILES.

(ACMA 2010)