



**THE TRUTH  
ABOUT**

# GETTING THE BEST FROM PEOPLE

SECOND EDITION

“Ditch the  
carrot and  
the stick...”

Martha I. Finney

*Leadership Consultant and Creator of Career Landscapes Team-Building Workshop*

# Praise for the First Edition

"Finally, a no-nonsense primer for leaders on how to build... and keep... extraordinary talent. This book should be in the briefcase of every exec in the world and should be pulled out every day for a refresher on how to be a *real* leader."

—**Dan Walker**, Former Chief Talent Officer for Apple, Inc.

"A fun and easy-to-read blueprint on understanding and creating engagement within a team. No high falootin' business jargon here—Martha Finney tells it like it is. She helps supervisors and managers uncover the secrets of employee engagement through behavioral examples, successes at top companies, and her charming storytelling."

—**Kirsten Clark**, Director of Global Workforce Training and Development,  
Save the Children,

"Martha succeeds in reducing one of the business world's most sought-after but amorphous concepts—employee engagement—into 69 digestible truths."

—**Christopher Rice**, President and CEO, BlessingWhite

"A must-read for new supervisors and managers, with lots of essential lessons and tips."

—**Tom Mathews**, Executive Vice President, Human Resources, Time Warner Cable

"Easy-to-read stories and useful truths about leading. I wish I had this book when I first became a manager. I had to learn some of these truths the hard way!"

—**Scott Shute**, Head of Global Customer Operations, LinkedIn

"The book is outstanding! Very easy to read... great examples, great advice, and the corporate world would be a better place if just 50 percent of the managers would follow your advice!"

—**Peg Wynn**, Former SVP/HR, Adobe

"I started reading and found myself grabbing for a highlighter. I got to the following line 'Getting the best is about building a culture of trust, connection, growth, and service.' I had to drop a box around that one."

—**Tiane Mitchell Gordon**, Senior Vice President, Office of Diversity and Inclusion, AOL

# The Truth About Getting the Best from People

## Table of Contents

Contents

Introduction

PART I: The Truth About Employee

Engagement

Truth 1 You dont need the carrot or the stick

Truth 2 You have direct influence over your employees passion quotient

Truth 3 You get the best by giving the best

Truth 4 Its not money that motivates

Truth 5 Employment engagement isnt for sissies

Truth 6 Real engagement gains happen after survey scores come in

PART II: The Truth About Yourself

Truth 7 Your behaviors are your brand

Truth 8 You cant give what you dont have

Truth 9 Best doesnt mean the same thing to everyone

Truth 10 Think youre a great leader? Think again

Truth 11 You could be your own worst employee

# Table of Contents

- Truth 12 Visionary or beat cop? Your choice
- Truth 13 Your health may be compromising your leadership effectiveness
- Truth 14 You dont have to be perfect
- Truth 15 Your career can recover from an engagement hit

## **PART III: The Truth About Engaged Cultures**

- Truth 16 Employee happiness is serious business
- Truth 17 Great leaders make their people cry
- Truth 18 Better questions lead to better answers
- Truth 19 Individual passion builds a passion-fueled customer service culture
- Truth 20 Authentic is better than clever
- Truth 21 Retention begins with hello
- Truth 22 The bad will do you good
- Truth 23 Your biggest complainer may be your best supporter
- Truth 24 You can sell an unpopular decision
- Truth 25 Flex is best
- Truth 26 Nobody cares if you dont mean to be mean
- Truth 27 Controlling your temper is a labor-saving device
- Truth 28 There is no but in Im sorry

## **PART IV: The Truth About Motivation**

## Table of Contents

Truth 29 Engagement happens one person at a time

Truth 30 If youre a manager, youre a career coach

Truth 31 The candidates youre seeking may not be the ones you need

Truth 32 Ask for cheeseyou might get the moon

Truth 33 You lead better when you get off your pedestal

Truth 34 Trust is your strongest persuasion tool

Truth 35 If they arent buying it, they arent doing it

Truth 36 Overselling an opportunity can cost you precious talent

Truth 37 Focusing on whats right can help solve whats wrong

Truth 38 High performers are motivated by a piece of the action

Truth 39 All the generations want the same thing

### **PART V: The Truth About Performance**

Truth 40 Compassion promotes performance

Truth 41 A hot star can brighten your whole team

Truth 42 B players are your A team

Truth 43 High performers have enough coffee mugs

Truth 44 Discipline deepens engagement

# Table of Contents

Truth 45 You dont have to inherit the problem employees

Truth 46 Performance appraisals are really about you

Truth 47 New hires can inspire current employees

Truth 48 Terminations are an engagement tool

## **PART VI: The Truth About Creativity**

Truth 49 Innovation begins with y-e-s

Truth 50 Everyone can be creative

Truth 51 You stand between inspiration and implementation

Truth 52 Failures promote progress

Truth 53 People dont quit their bosses, they quit their colleagues

Truth 54 Extreme pressure kills inspired performance

Truth 55 Creativity is a balancing act

## **PART VII: The Truth About Communication**

Truth 56 Open questions ignite inspiring answers

Truth 57 Serving your employees means managing your boss

Truth 58 Bad news is good news

Truth 59 Trivial conversations are essential

Truth 60 The way you listen speaks volumes

Truth 61 Crap happens

# Table of Contents

Truth 62 Engaged employees need to know more

## PART VIII: The Truth About Teams

Truth 63 Absence makes the employee happier

Truth 64 Your team has untapped talent

Truth 65 People need to fight their own battles

Truth 66 Games dont build teams

Truth 67 Answers build teams

Truth 68 Your team can lead you to greatness

Truth 69 Youre still the boss

References

About the Author