Passion is the New Engagement

By [Alistair Lloyd](#)

Five tips for unleashing the focus, curiosity, and trust of your team

In September 2013 Deloitte University Press [https://dupress.com/] published *Unlocking the passion of the Explorer* [https://dupress.com/articles/unlocking-the-passion-of-the-explorer/]. The article is a remarkable and well-researched perspective on building and supporting team members so they can deliver sustained performance. Key to this is the concept of the "Explorer", and the "Passion of the Explorer", which they define here:

> "We must figure out how to thrive—and not simply survive—in this new uncertainty, and we believe that individuals with worker passion will be the key. Three attributes characterize worker passion: Commitment to Domain, Questing, and Connecting dispositions. Commitment to Domain can be understood as a desire to have a lasting and increasing impact on a particular industry or function. Workers with the Questing disposition actively seek out challenges to rapidly improve their performance. Workers with the Connecting disposition seek deep interactions with others and build strong, trust-based relationships to gain new insight. Together these attributes define the 'Passion of the Explorer'—the worker passion that leads to extreme sustained performance improvement."

Previously at CIO of the Future we have highlighted the creative strengths of your IT team [https://rossdawson.com/blog/creative-intelligent-funny-passionate-could-this-be-your-it-team/] 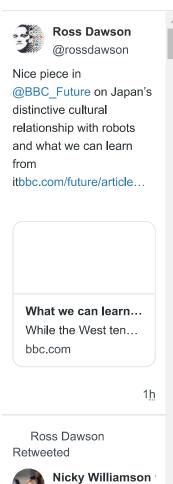and explored the powerful alliance [https://rossdawson.com/blog/avengers-assemble-why-senior-superheros-should-fight-together/] that you can form with your executive peers. Influencing business-owned IT outcomes [https://rossdawson.com/blog/cmos-and-cios-will-it-ever-be-happily-ever-after/] and the risks of IT being by-passed [https://rossdawson.com/blog/must-the-business-always-bypass-it-

As a CIO of the Future you need to create an environment in which employees embody passion, beyond simple engagement. Understanding and sharing the concepts in this article is a catalyst to achieving this.

Here are some conversation starters, based on the article, for you and your leadership team.

1. Understand the difference between passion and engagement

Building and measuring your IT team's engagement is different to gauging their passion. You will need to hire people with the right combination of dispositions – Explorers – then place them in a nurturing environment that will allow them to flourish. Employee engagement does not imply satisfaction or happiness; it means employees have an emotional commitment to the organization and its goals. Passion means they demonstrate deeply engrained interest, long-term commitment, and sustained achievement. As the article shows, organizations where team members embody passion demonstrate prolonged and improved performance.

2. Build your future organization

Hire by looking at candidates' future potential (such as learning capacity, and their ability to use the tools and resources around them in a novel manner), not just their historic achievement (qualifications, past projects) . You want your team to have the ability to deliver break-through improvements in business performance, not just the ability to do the same things faster. Establish an apprentice-like program where you bring raw talent into your group and partner them with team members who can guide their discovery journey, rather than direct their working style.

3. Feed them chaos

Clarity of roles, rigid silos, and predictable work patterns form barriers that block and dishearten Explorers. Consider how you could form a flexible IT organization that blurs traditional structures while providing ongoing, reliable services to your company. Mobilize your Explorers where they will thrive and have the most impact. Find the unstructured, unstable and untested forefront of your business. Allow them the space to experiment, ideate, and prototype. This is their oxygen.

source" that goes beyond code libraries; it extends to a wider community of like-minded individuals. This is not for peer networking, and may not even involve other IT professionals. Rather, the IT Explorer has the hunger to learn and the impetus to adapt their methods based on what they encounter.

Break down the barriers that are limiting the flow of knowledge and information in and out of your company. This may require adjustments to your existing security and intellectual property protection policies, as they were most likely written without thought of the value that these knowledge flows can bring to your organization.

5. Apply intrinsic motivation

Retain and motivate your IT Explorers with intrinsic rather than extrinsic rewards. Explorers are not motivated by what they are paid, the foosball table in the lunchroom, or the fridge full of sodas. They are looking for an environment in which they feel fulfilled, creative, and supported. If you create this environment then they will stay with you and achieve great outcomes.

Take the time to read the article in full [https://dupress.com/articles/unlocking-the-passion-of-the-explorer/] . Share it with your managers. Then ask yourself – if you had a team of Explorers, what could you discover?

Are there Explorers in your team? What do you see as the biggest challenges in unleashing your Explorers ? And how might you overcome these challenges?

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