

3 Ways to Power Employee Engagement that Don't Include Surveys



Gallup reports that the number of actively disengaged employees rose to 18%. This is not good news when you consider that a disengaged employee is 2.3x more likely to be exploring other jobs!

Employee engagement is a measure of employees' commitment to helping their organization achieve its goals. More than just a measure of one's satisfaction at work, it's demonstrated by how employees think, feel, and act, as well as the emotional connection employees feel towards their organization, their work, and their teams. It's the energy they have around their work, and in the end, employee engagement is the outcome or result of different aspects of the overall employee experience.

Prior to 2020, engagement was rising globally for nearly a decade – but now, employee engagement is stagnant, and most believe it's because teams have less opportunity to build meaningful connections. Addressing the structural and cultural issues that have limited connection and created disengagement in your organization is the first step to laying the foundation for a new and better employee experience.



A State of Disconnectedness Led to Disengagement

The sudden shift to remote work over the last few years gave people an opportunity to do more than just spruce up their home offices. It gave them a chance to think and reevaluate bigger topics, like just how work fits into their lives.

And this has undoubtedly contributed to trends like the [Great Resignation](#) and quiet quitting, as many employees realized that personal needs, such as connection, family, happiness, and health mattered more to them than promotions, career paths, and other work-related objectives.

We don't have to tell you, this inevitably leads to turnover, which can leave your organization in a bind. Estimates show that every time a business replaces a salaried employee, it costs 6 to 9 months' salary on average. For a manager making \$60,000 a year, that's \$30,000 to \$45,000 in recruiting and training expenses. This doesn't even account for all of the soft costs required to onboard a new employee, the impacts on morale and culture, loss of knowledge and productivity, or the ways that whole teams can be affected when it's a team leader who leaves.



**For a manager
making \$60,000/yr:
\$30,000-\$45,000
is lost**

What engaged vs. disengaged employees look like

So how does disengagement show itself? If you notice team members going through the motions of the day, lackluster and exhausted, counting the minutes until they can call it quits for the day. That's disengagement, and it can be costly, so it's important to know how to spot it before it's too late.

Some obvious signs of low engagement:

- ✗ Frequent absences or tardiness
- ✗ Missing deadlines
- ✗ Making careless mistakes
- ✗ A negative attitude

More subtle signs include:

- ✗ Doing the bare minimum
- ✗ Poor communication
- ✗ Avoiding team building or colleague interactions
- ✗ Not showing interest in learning and development opportunities



Well, that's a downer. So let's flip to the engaged employee! Highly engaged employees feel valued and appreciated for their contributions. They feel connected to both the people around them and the organization's mission.

Telltale signs of an engaged employee include:

- ✓ High levels of motivation
- ✓ Desire to learn and grow
- ✓ Exceeding expectations
- ✓ Building connections with co-workers



Employees' levels of engagement have the potential to make or break an organization. Just how much does an engaged workforce improve a business's bottom line? Here are a few of the numbers according to Gallup.

Organizations with highly engaged employees report:

- **81% less absenteeism**
- **43% less turnover**
- **23% higher profitability**

To effectively mitigate and prevent future disengagement, you have to first get to the root of the problem – how and why employees become disengaged.

Here are just a few of the reasons:

- 1. Poor onboarding**
- 2. Lack of connection or purpose**
- 3. Absence of recognition**
- 4. Not feeling heard by leaders**

But this doesn't happen overnight. There is no disengage button your employee clicks. Instead, employees experience any – or all – of the examples listed above over the tenure of their career or their time at your company. And if not mitigated, slowly but surely, an employee who came into a position with the highest of potential will now be spending their workday waiting for it to be over.

The good news is that some of the most important and impactful solutions to these issues take into account the fact that work life and personal contentment aren't mutually exclusive. In fact, everything – including employee engagement and retention – improves when we bring the two into alignment through deeper connection.

Here are three ways to (re)build connection and re-engage employees.



1. Design effective onboarding

Onboarding an employee is like making a first impression. It's about putting your best foot forward – previewing the values and culture of the organization to the employee. And like first impressions, onboarding can be critical to an employee's relationship with a company.

In fact, employees will decide in just **45 days** if your organization—your team—is right for them? And sadly, more than **20 percent** usually decide it's not. Why?

In most cases, the number one reason a team member leaves is because of the manager-employee relationship. A GoodHire survey found that **82 percent** of workers would quit a job because of a bad manager or friction with their boss. When you factor in the loss of productivity your team experiences when they leave, the gut punch to morale, and the time you invested in finding your new hire—which is often double the amount of time they actually spent on the job... we're talking upwards of a 90 to 120-day hiring process—it's really expensive and painful to lose new employees, or any employee, to issues like this.

So ensure your onboarding process is far-reaching, transparent, and takes into account communication and relationship-building between the manager & new employee. Ask highly engaged employees to speak to new employees; make space for questions and comments; and facilitate team building for new hires to bond with each other and the company.

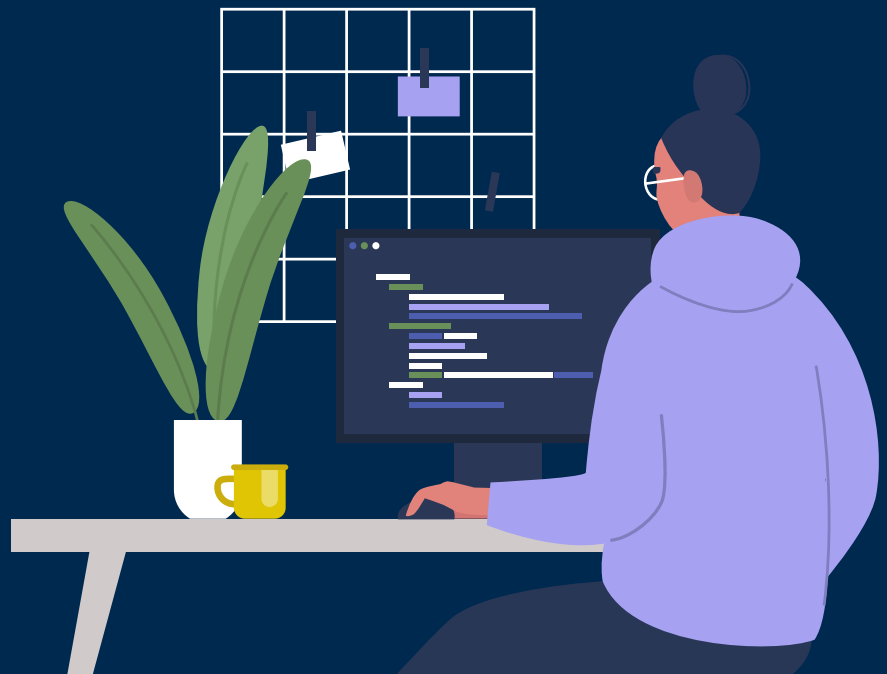


The Game Changer: Tailor Employee Training at Scale

When it comes to training, the old “one-size-fits-all” tactic just doesn’t cut it anymore. Just as in other facets of their lives, people expect a personalized experience. With a more tech-savvy workforce than ever before, online learning platforms are a big hit. Some organizations are even rethinking training content altogether and how they can better cater to diverse learning appetites, ensuring greater effectiveness in the long run. Fortunately, training and creating an environment that values continuous learning doesn’t have to take a ton of time and is easy when you leverage AI.

For example, say you have a new GenZ hire that needs to email the head of sales, John, every week with reported leads. The problem is, they hardly

know John and have no idea how John likes to consume information. With an AI tool that uses your company's previously recorded **psychometric data**, your new hire can use pre-supplemented suggestions to ensure their emails are comprehensive and useful for John, despite never meeting or hardly interacting with John. This AI-fueled approach to “on-the-fly” training can extend beyond emails to all communications, ultimately helping your employees learn new skills and making their contributions to the business more impactful. When you support your new hires like this, you’re setting them up for success and building a strong relationship out of the gate.



2. Promote connection and purpose

As humans, we are hardwired to crave connection – something that has become even more important with the rise of remote and hybrid work. When employees feel connected to their co-workers and the organization's mission, they are more engaged, not to mention more productive and less likely to leave the organization.

We spend nearly **40%** of our lives at work! Strong social connections make people happier and physically healthier, which can translate into work performance – and employers that support social connections in the workplace and help employees form strong relationships with one another are helping to build a more successful workforce. That's where communication comes in – and encouraging employees to communicate to connect rather than simply transact.



Benefits of Team Connectedness

+34%

greater goal attainment

+36%

boost in well-being

+59%

more positive relationships

+92%

more professional growth



The Game Changer: Prioritize Connection During Communication Touchpoints

Connection to your organization is just as important as connection to one another. Of course, this is fundamentally part of human connection. In fact, perceptions of social support from workplace friendships have been proven to be positively related to workers' views of being appreciated by the organization and their overall job satisfaction.

Here are some ways to help start generating some of those positive feelings!

- **Face-to-face Interaction:** Make sure your employees are making the most of their in-office days and that there are adequate spaces and reasons for in-person interactions.

- **Encourage spontaneous check-ins:** With fewer people around us, it's easy just to immerse ourselves in work, but regular check-ins with others are crucial for everyone, in particular leaders who may not otherwise notice if their team is struggling.
- **Mobility / New Challenges:** Make sure your employees aren't being overlooked for internal opportunities. Start harnessing the power of your current workflow...this includes upward movement, learning & development, or upskilling.
- **Include remote employees at all times:** Make sure your remote employees aren't being overlooked for team and company events. Be mindful to create opportunities for genuine human connection for these employees or resentment can start to creep in.
- **Support informal mentorships:** Facilitate communication across departments and employees of different ages and experience levels so team members can learn more about each other and their areas of work, while sparking new ideas and interests.
- **Demonstrate empathy any time a team member expresses a problem or frustration:** Use The Empathy Formula to acknowledge the team member's feelings based on facts. Here's the formula: "It sounds like you're (feeling) because/about (fact)." Here's a real-life example: "It sounds like you're feeling overwhelmed (feeling) because of the reduced number of people on the team (fact)."
- **Recognize employee contributions big or small:** Recognition and gratitude are integral to creating a positive employee experience. Workhuman's Employee Experience Index with IBM Smarter Workforce Institute – based on a study of more than 23,000 workers – showed that when employees receive recognition for doing good work, 83% report a more positive employee experience. Set up formal or informal channels of recognition, and start seeing connection to the organization increase.

3. Use Technology to Make Collaboration Easier for Distributed Teams

Research has shown that workers who trust senior leaders are nearly 2x as likely to be engaged, and that translates into successful business outcomes. Many U.S. studies report high-trust organizations are 2.5X more likely to be high-performing revenue companies than their low-trust counterparts.



2X
more engaged



2.5X
more profitable

As you might guess, building trust among your team typically takes time because it's based on experiences. However, in today's distributed teams where things happen quickly, and there is less opportunity for organic interactions, you need to expedite the process if you want employees to collaborate more effectively and achieve results. And to do it, you don't need to roll out big, fancy, expensive new software. Use what you have.

The Game Changer: Collaboration Plug-ins for Deeper Connection

With a simple [add-on or plug-in](#) to your existing communication tools, your team members have the insights needed to connect and work more effectively together. The plug-in surfaces actionable insights into the existing daily workflows of all teams — within chats, team channels, emails, and meetings.

Your team then has access to the kind of information needed to better understand, connect, and collaborate with another – the kind of information that normally only comes after months,

if not years, of working with one another, and the kind of information you use to only get when working in-office with others.

Here's an example in Teams, where you have custom communication tips for everyone in the meeting.

Using technology like this is one way to enable the kind of connection that leads to more engaged teams and better productivity, not to mention a significant reduction in team friction and miscommunications.

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Teams meeting window with the Humantelligence plug-in open. The plug-in displays a profile for John Ordoñez, a Software Developer. It provides insights into his work behaviors and communication style. The 'Behaviors' section is active, showing 'Stability Oriented (71%)' and 'Change Oriented (29%)'. Under 'Stability Oriented', there are categories like 'Deliberate (2)', 'Reflective (0)', 'Steady (2)', and 'Cautious (1)'. Under 'Change Oriented', there are categories like 'Decisive (1)', 'Outgoing (0)', 'Spontaneous (1)', and 'Freeform (0)'. The 'Communicating with John' section lists tips such as 'Tries to have homework done and appreciates the same from others. Likes when someone supports a position with facts and data.' and 'Likes to find areas of common interest with...'

Not Convinced? Try for yourself with a [Free Team Trial](#).

Building stronger engagement at your company

Ensuring a positive and empowering working environment where all employees feel valued and connected doesn't just help your company; it helps your people. An employee who feels connection to others is an employee who is more likely to find their work meaningful. An employee who finds their work meaningful is an employee likely to be engaged—demonstrating through their work a commitment to the overall success of the business... and all without having to do another employee survey.

**Inspire deeper connection among colleagues.
Create more collaborative relationships.
See engagement & productivity soar.**

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