

The Importance of Employee Engagement



Employee engagement may sound like a simple concept, but it's much more complicated than meets the eye. Employee engagement plays a critical role in building an engaged and motivated team—engaged employees enjoy going to work, feel good about their job performance, and understand their role. Employees who are involved work hard to achieve goals and objectives and seek feedback to find more effective ways to do their jobs. These employee engagement descriptors should sound great to any employer. After all, who doesn't want an employee who's motivated and driven? Organizations that wish engaged employees need to engage with their employees to build buy-ins and support.

Employee engagement is a workplace methodology that creates an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages employees to do their best each day. Employee engagement must be a collaborative effort between employees and employers to be successful. Employees are accountable for their actions and attitudes. Still, employers play an important role in creating a positive and welcoming workplace. Employee engagement is something that takes time to happen. It's a continuous process that must be active in an organization's day-to-day operations to achieve effective results.

There are many elements and nuances of employee engagement. From an employee's perspective, employee engagement can be divided into two main categories: attitudes and actions.

Attitude

Employee attitudes are a combination of an employee's thoughts and feelings. How does an employee feel about their job? Does an employee understand their role and feel supported? Does an employee feel valued as part of the team? Or does an employee feel isolated and

unsupported? There's no way to measure employee attitudes accurately, but how employees think and feel dramatically impacts how they feel in the workplace and how engaged they are. Employees who feel valued and trusted and that their job performance is appreciated perform better and put more energy into going above and beyond.

Action

Employee actions are directly related to an employee's attitude. Suppose an employee feels negatively about their organization, team, or job. In that case, they're less likely to do their job at the expected level. Disengaged employees feel they need to be more motivated and happier with their jobs or job functions. They're more likely to be late, leave early, or put in less effort when doing their job. Employees who are engaged are more likely not only to do their job well but also to take extra steps to do it at the highest level possible. Employee actions directly affect an organization's profitability and reputation, so employee engagement also impacts your organization's bottom line and overall perception.

Employee engagement has a wide range of benefits. Employee job satisfaction is one of the most visible. When employees are engaged, they're more involved with what they're doing. It's no coincidence that employee job satisfaction directly correlates to employee turnover. Employees who are happy with their jobs are far less likely to leave than those who aren't. Reduced turnover saves companies time and money because they can spend less time and money on hiring and training new employees.

Another significant advantage of employee engagement is productivity. Employees who are engaged and happy with their jobs are more likely to turn up to work every

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day. Disengaged employees are more prone to calling out because they feel less loyal to their employer. Employees who are engaged perform their job duties with higher productivity because they spend more time on the job. Higher productivity means higher profitability for your business. Employee engagement is also associated with better client and customer relationships. Good client relationships help retain customers and increase referrals, leading to higher profitability.

Ten opportunities to improve your employee engagement:

1. **Growth** - Every employee desires to learn and grow within their organization. If you invest in their growth through learning and development, you can earn their discretionary energy, engagement, and loyalty.
2. **Happiness** - Happiness can be challenging to measure. Still, some indicators of joy at work include whether or not an employee feels autonomy over their work, feel supported and not overwhelmed with their workload, and have an excellent work-life balance.
3. **Ambassadorship** - Do you know what stories your employees are telling about your company? The level of ambassadorship can measure your employees' loyalty and the message they convey about your company. Engaging your employees is essential because your customers can feel the stories they share inside the company on the outside.
4. **Relationship to Peers** - Do your employees have positive relationships with each other? Focusing on peer-to-peer relationships is crucial to maintaining excellent internal service cooperation. You can foster great peer-to-peer relationships by offering opportunities for peer recognition that lets colleagues create a community of acknowledgment and engagement.
5. **Relationship to Manager** - Leadership is vital in any organization. Many employees stay (and thrive) in a company not because of the organization but because of their manager. Are your leaders creating excellent relationships with their direct reports? Are they providing them with one-on-one coaching and clear, open communication?
6. **Recognition** - Recognition in the workplace can take various forms, such as a simple non-monetary thank-you or acknowledgment in front of peers. It can also include monetary recognition such as bonuses, a salary increases, or a in-house recognition program, where you can reward employees at every touchpoint with unique rewards that they can personalize based on their interests. Personalized rewards are crucial because they show that you value your employees and are dedicated to their growth.
7. **Feedback** - Feedback is essential to your employees' growth and happiness. Do your leaders have frequent and open communication with their direct reports? Are they transparent in their expectations and working with employees to help them improve? Feedback and coaching are essential for engagement because your employees will feel valued, know what they need to do to improve, and see that you are dedicated to their growth.
8. **Wellness** - It is easy to tell if your company culture is focused on wellness because it can be measured by various indicators such as overall absenteeism, productivity, and employee health. A culture of wellness offers many benefits, including lower turnover, increased attraction of new employees, decreased absenteeism, greater productivity, and a decrease in health disorders such as lack of sleep, anxiety, and obesity.
9. **Alignment** - Whether or not a person is aligned with your organization starts from the very minute they are hired. That's why hiring employees who are a cultural fit is essential. For example, personalization traits such as friendliness and fun can rarely be trained, so it's crucial to ensure your new hires are a good fit; otherwise, they are unlikely to thrive in your environment.
10. **Job Fit & Compensation** - Overall, employee satisfaction is a good indicator of employee engagement. It includes elements such as compensation, work environment, and fit of the role for the employee. Some ways to improve overall employee satisfaction include providing fair and competitive salaries, offering flexibility to work remotely or flexible hours, and providing autonomy and authority to do their role to the best of their ability (i.e., not micromanaging).

By focusing on the indicators of employee engagement discussed above, such as learning and development, coaching, wellness, cultural alignment, rewards and recognition, and catering to each employee's needs and desires, you can achieve great satisfaction in your organization, which will be felt by your customers outside.

