

Employee Engagement in an Age of Disconnection

by Abba Belgrave, Sales Support Manager

As a concept employee engagement is vague but vital. How connected an employee feels to your organization impacts their motivation to perform. If your organization understands and provides what your staff needs to thrive, issues like absenteeism, presenteeism and [burnout](#) can be managed more effectively to everyone's benefit.

But HR teams are stretched thin. As are budgets. As are employees themselves. Striking a balance between organizational needs and employee concerns is one of many persistent challenges. Yet each employer should start or continue to do this work as we prepare to enter 2025. Doing so will help your workforce be adaptable and resilient which in turn helps your organization succeed at its own mandate.

And so, with each new generation entering the workforce, what fuels employee engagement shifts. We know already that [Gen Z](#) has different concerns from [Boomers](#) never mind those [employees caught between conflicting responsibilities](#). A one size fits all approach will not work.

So keep it simple. Organizational change by its very nature is hard to accomplish. You absolutely need buy-in from leadership if it is going to be effective. HR alone cannot accomplish these goals but you can start creating the environment that promotes employee connection while building the institutional structures that support change.

1. Identify Your Disengaged Employees

Figuring out which employees are disengaged can help you streamline solutions. Depending on the size of your organization this can mean sending out an employee survey and noting who takes the time to respond and who does not. Or it can mean opening a dialogue with different department heads about what's happening with their subordinates. Employee disengagement can take many forms so it's important for managers to recognize when employees are withdrawing.

2. Lead With Emotional Intelligence

One of the top employee engagement trends of 2024 is creating a people-first culture within your organization. Authenticity matters when dealing with employees. They know the bottom-line matters for their employer but also want to matter as individuals to the company's overall mission. Opening a dialogue of mutual respect with your staff can create an environment where people share feedback that supports the needs of all. Managers should set aside time to meet with employees one-on-one and treat those meetings as important. Recognize their contributions and ask for their perspective.

3. Advocate for Workplace Wellness

Employees often spend an inordinate amount of time working, especially those who are deeply entrenched in industries where the rat race is expected of them. The well-being of your employees both physically and mentally should continue to be a priority for HR. If you aren't seeing employee engagement in the wellness benefits offered by your organization, consider how you're communicating these benefits and how often. One thing to be aware of with each new generation that enters the workforce is how communication needs will differ. A multi-pronged approach to wellness can broaden the reach of your initiatives.

And to be clear, HR should not do this work on their own. No one can do this on their own and that is the point. The antidote to employee disengagement is creating a company culture that recognizes how we are all connected and works to communicate the importance of the individual to the whole. Reach out to your broker partner for strategies that work for your organization. Start a dialogue with leadership. While it can be overwhelming, small steps can create change.

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