



Puzzled by Employee Engagement? Here's What You Can Do to Improve It

Click! There it is. You open your inbox, and another finished project greets you—courtesy of your rock star team. As you lean back in your chair, you smile and think, “Wow, my team is on a roll.” And maybe they are. But do finished projects and completed deadlines really indicate full engagement?

Not exactly.

Although everything on the outside seems to contradict it's true, the fact remains—your team members are disengaged. Yes, they're still performing well. But, as long as they remain partially disengaged, they'll never achieve their full potential.

So, how can you tell your employees are disengaged? How can you help them achieve their full potential? What can leaders, managers, and individual team members do to create a culture that promotes engagement? We explore your options in the article below.

Let's get started.

The Signs of Employee Disengagement

With only 30 percent of US employees feeling engaged at work ([according to Gallup](#)), disengagement can manifest itself in a variety of ways among the remaining 70 percent. We listed five ways that seemingly “engaged” employees demonstrate disengagement.

1. **Employees Aren't Challenging Their Limits**—Your team members might produce quality work, but that could mean they don't feel challenged enough. When employees feel unchallenged by their work, they often disengage from the work itself.
2. **Silence**—Sure, your team meets deadlines. But do team members celebrate their work? Do they hear affirmation from you or other leaders? If quietness blankets the office when you know people should be celebrating or enjoying each other's company, then that could indicate disengagement as well.

3. **Lack of Curiosity**—Refusal to accept training opportunities could indicate low levels of engagement. Engaged employees seek out opportunities to learn. They share resources and articles they find useful. If you see a lack of initiative towards learning, that could mean disengagement below the surface.
4. **Broken Habits**—Are members of your team silent during meetings where they might've formerly spoken up? Are they not meeting deadlines they would normally meet ahead of time? Do they consistently show up late and leave early? Chances are they're feeling disengaged and unmotivated. It might be time to check in.
5. **Complacency & Apathy**—You know your employees have their own ideas and points of view. But are they sharing them as they did before? Do they choose silence in a discussion instead of standing up for their opinions? Do they shy away from debates or opt out of defending their ideas? Are they letting go of commitments? Again, it might be time for a conversation.

We gave you five signs of potential employee disengagement. Of course, there are plenty of other signs out there that we could explore. But we're here to talk solutions. So, let's get to it.

What Can You Do to Boost Engagement?

Driving long-term employee engagement requires an organization to view the challenge of employee engagement as more than another HR initiative or a one-time event. While a culture of employee engagement starts with an organization's leadership, it depends on *everyone's* contribution in order to thrive.

What can employees at *each level* of an organization do to increase engagement?

Leaders CHANGE

As individuals with the power and resources to affect change on an organization-wide level, leaders have a lot of responsibility to meet their organizations' business goals along with the needs of their employees.

To do so, **leaders** must create the **CHANGE** needed to form a culture of engagement by making the following moves:

C: Create community—Leaders foster a sense of connection between employees and a sense of purpose in the work of each individual.

H: Honesty and transparency—Leaders foster relationship-building that creates trust, open dialogue, and full transparency. They model organizational values that reflect engagement strategies. They lead through example and set a positive tone for the culture of their organizations.

A: Align employees—Leaders share compelling visions for their organizations. They provide clear directions and goals to rally their organizations towards the unified pursuit of a common vision.

N: Negotiate needs—Leaders encourage open dialogue with their organizations’ primary stakeholders—its employees. Leaders can’t meet the needs of their employees unless they know what those needs are. And there’s no better way to understand someone’s needs than to ask them personally. When we listen, we learn. From there, leaders continue the conversation and negotiate with employees on how to meet their stated needs.

G: Gain insight—Leaders know the current state of engagement within their organizations. How are people feeling? What are they doing and saying? Leaders plug into the conversations that allow them to gain a feel for the company’s pulse.

E: Enthusiasm—Leaders generate excitement and take time to celebrate hard work and achievements. They make space for affirmation, even with everyday tasks.

Managers COACH

From hiring and onboarding to coaching and development, **managers** impact the employee experience and drive the bottom line in a variety of ways. They play a critical role in working one-on-one with their teams to create high levels of satisfaction and performance. Engaged managers *COACH* their teams to achieve organizational success by taking the following steps:

C: Capitalize on strengths—Managers develop and leverage peoples’ *existing* talents and skills rather than focusing too much on improving weaknesses.

O: Opportunity—Through succession planning and career pathing, managers work with those they manage to create opportunities for advancement.

A: Align daily priorities—Managers provide clarity for individuals in their work and align individual work with organizational goals.

C: Clarify expectations—Managers clarify expectations so that individuals understand them.

H: Humanize relationships (and prioritize inclusivity)—Engaged managers care about their people. They build solid, trusting relationships, welcome ongoing feedback and diverse perspectives, recognize efforts and achievements, and care about the wellbeing and work/life balance of the individuals they manage.

Individuals OWN

Individual employees represent an organization's biggest asset. Satisfied, highly motivated, and loyal employees provide a competitive advantage. Finding success and achieving satisfaction in their professional lives requires individual employees to *OWN* their engagement by prioritizing the following aspects of work:

O: Ownership—It's up to individual employees to take responsibility for their experience. Cultures of engagement encourage employees to visualize what success looks like on a personal level.

W: Work with talents and strengths—Individual employees should talk with managers about where they can focus their interests, talents, and aspirations. If an individual feels like their talents are underutilized, they should feel welcomed to start a conversation with their manager.

N: Nurture relationships—Relationships can make or break someone's work experience. Getting coworkers to know each other, whether it's through a happy hour or a hallway convo, can drive engagement.

Acronyms Are Only the Beginning

For as complex as it is, employee engagement requires only a few simple solutions to improve on an organizational level. But, if you're looking for a more comprehensive solution to help leaders, managers, and individuals create a culture of engagement, talk to us. We'd love to tell you more about how PXT Select™ can give you exactly what you're looking for.

Contact us @ info@livetolearninc.com

Source: PXT Select™: A Wiley Brand

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