

# 8 Employee Engagement Strategies for a Better Workplace Environment (Plus the Ultimate Guide to Employee Engagement)

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What makes a workplace a place of work? Is it the office premises, the machine equipment or the luxurious facilities? No, it's the human workers, also known as the human capital, that determine both the quality of the workplace and the future of the organization.

The more engaged they are, the better it is for the organization.

With the advent and proliferation of the knowledge economy, corporate leaders have come to realize that they must go beyond acquisition and recruitment and focus on the full employee lifecycle. They recognize the importance of discovering viable employee engagement strategies to maximize their human capital investment and turn them into high-ROI assets for the business.

With effective employee engagement ideas, employees will not only have the ability to improve their performance but will also bring unique benefits to the organization in the form of higher profitability, better customer retention, better talent acquisition and retention, lower employee turnover, and a safer work environment. This adds to the bottom line quarter over quarter and ensures long-term prosperity for the organization.





# What is Employee Engagement?

In a 2017 study by Gallup, it was found that only 15 percent of the world's one billion workers are engaged at work. That's an alarming statistic. Lower engagement leads to lower productivity and thus, slower economic growth

It's a downward spiral that originates with our lack of understanding of human capital management, or more specifically, employee engagement. It is clear that very few organizations truly understand or value the meaning of the term.

That brings us to the question, "what is employee engagement?" It sounds simple but goes deep. Let us start with what it is not. It is not a strategy. The word "strategy" connotes being able to bring about a preferable outcome through tactical moves. However, what a sound employee engagement strategy essentially does is boost the likelihood that the relationship between the employee and the organization will be positive in nature.

"Employee engagement cannot be a strategy because engagement comes from within the employee. It's the emotional connection or commitment that an employee has to the organization that then causes the employee to want to put forth the additional effort to ensure the organization and the brand succeed."

— Annette Franz



But for the sake of this article, we have used the term strategy to signify the necessary steps you can take in order to ensure that the employees achieve a positive emotional connection with the organization and, above all, the work they are assigned to do. In light of that, there are three parts of any feasible employee engagement strategy:

- Physical – employees exert a high amount of energy to do the work. The level of complexity of work corresponds to the employees’ specialized skill sets.
- Emotional – employees understand the job’s significance and put their heart into the job. They feel challenged and inspired while doing it and feel a sense of achievement when finished.
- Cognitive – employees become engrossed with their work and start to get into the flow.

When an employee is engaged on these three levels, his or her personal investment in the work is maximum and he or she starts to feel an emotional connection to it.



# The Benefits of an Engaged Workforce

Engaged employees....

- Are self-motivated
- Have a clear understanding of their roles
- Recognize the significance of their contribution
- Focus on future training and development
- Feel that they belong to the community—that is, the organization

Employee engagement results in improved motivation and better job satisfaction, and thus, a lower cost to value ratio for your human personnel expenditure. It goes like this: while every employee adds to the bottom line, every engaged employee adds that much more.

This idea, also known as the service-profit chain, was introduced by Harvard researchers in the 1990s that traces business profitability and customer loyalty right back to engaged, motivated employees.

Top corporate leaders know that engaged employees can help raise productivity, increase profits, enhance customer experience, foster brand loyalty, and facilitate growth.





# 8 Employee Engagement Strategies for Improved Workplace

## #1 Employee Engagement Strategy – Adopt a Bottom-Up Approach

The construction of a house starts by building the right foundation at the bottom—not the roof! With any major decision in the organization, it is warranted that it starts at the lowest tiers—your employees. Conduct questionnaires and surveys that permit your employees to express their opinions and concerns. This research shows that 1 in 6 employees are so unhappy they are looking for a new job. A survey might be the best way to spur your employee engagement strategy. The more you ask for their opinions, the more they feel esteemed, entitled, respected, and like they belong to the organization.

## #2 Employee Engagement Strategy – Promote Two-Way Communication

To promote employee engagement, the first requirement is to keep the employees out of the dark. If organizations act secretive and only divulge information on a “need-to-know” basis, it will likely cause lower engagement rates among their employees. Transparency begets trust when employees get to understand how corporate decisions will affect the workplace or how they should deal with situations.

But is disseminating information enough? No, communication should go two ways—the employees should be encouraged to share their concerns so they don’t feel ignored or unvalued. Top business leaders generally believe in the open door policy and do not use “top-secret” information to their advantage.

## #3 Employee Engagement Strategy – Encourage Community Participation

An organization is essentially a community; each member fulfills a specific task and serves the community as a whole. To encourage this community spirit among your employees, any engagement activity can help, from organizing a big annual event to simply taking a team out to lunch.

Notwithstanding the hierarchy present in the organization, it is better to maintain a certain level of equality and unbiasedness where everyone feels they are important to the community.

This philosophy is typical in the new-age technology startups where they adopt a more casual, no-walls organizational policy. Though sustaining this new business approach might be tricky, it can lead to highly engaged staff.

#### **#4 Employee Engagement Strategy – Recognize Good Work**

Two out of three employees feel they do not get enough recognition for their work. As a result, most employees will not deliver their maximum potential and may engage in unwanted behavior. Also, highly-trained and qualified talent is always looking for better options out there.

For this reason, it is wise to create a recognition-rich environment where good work is rewarded with perks and incentives. At the very least, a few good words and a certificate of appreciation can go a long way in letting others feel valued for their work.

It's worth noting here that every form of recognition should conform to the organization's mission, goals, and philosophy. It is about steering the human capital in the right direction, after all.

#### **#5 Employee Engagement Strategy – Invest in Personal Growth**

This is part of the nurturing phase of human capital management. Every human asset that you acquire should be fostered and polished to assist in the long-term growth of the organization. Whether it is by running a proprietary training program or sponsoring higher education for your employees, you are not only investing in the future of your company but also creating a sense of loyalty among your employees.

Remember, every employee loves a company that supports them in their professional career and adds value to their personal lives. Want to retain top-notch talent in your organization? Do not act selfish or dismissive. Ensure their personal growth and you will reap the benefits.

#### **#6 Employee Engagement Strategy – Hire Competent Managers**

Your secret weapon to spur employee engagement is the managers—they are the middlemen between boardroom members and the employees. In most cases, the



employees interact with the top-level executives rarely, if ever, but have daily interactions with their immediate bosses. Whether they are feeling secure, angry, or ignored depends on the tact of the respective manager.

Are they capable of handling the employees? If not, what can they do better?

Gallup's chairman, Jim Clifton, once said: "Employees—especially the stars—join a company and then quit their manager. It may not be the manager's fault so much as these managers have not been prepared to coach the new workforce."

While organizations can choose to educate their managers on how to better engage their employees, it is always better to hire a capable manager first. Check their professional background and try to see if they are suited for the tricky job waiting for them.

## #7 Employee Engagement Strategy – Create a Sense of Purpose

Employees are not robots; they are human. Organizations that tend to see employees as a commodity that can be bought at a certain price have not woken up to the true essence of human capital, unfortunately. Your employees are not another factor of production, but prospective champions of your organization's values and principles.

Although a hefty paycheck definitely helps, when an employee feels an emotional connection to your brand they will be able to provide higher personal investment and contribute in far greater measure.

One of the ways to ensure this is to let your employees know how significant their contribution is. Tell them how it is helping in achieving the organization's business objectives. Simply speaking, organizations need to start making their employees feel that they matter.

## #8 Employee Engagement Strategy – Sketch a Success Roadmap

This applies most if you hire millennials in your organization. For many millennials, just coming to the office, doing the work assigned, and taking the paycheck back home is not enough. They are more conscious about where they will stand in the next five or

ten years. They need to know there are sufficient growth prospects for the role they are fulfilling.

Sketching a proper roadmap of success is yet another pillar to a successful employee engagement strategy. Holding regular career counseling sessions or chalking out a clear career advancement path might help a lot when it comes to millennial employee engagement.



## Bonus tips:

### #1 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Introduce team building activities

Team building activities can be a great way to improve employee engagement and foster a positive work culture. Here are a few ideas for team building activities that you might consider:

#### **Trust building exercises:**

These activities help team members build trust and support one another. Some of the examples include “Human Knot” or the “Trust Fall.”

#### **Communication challenges:**

Activities that require team members to communicate effectively can help improve team communication and collaboration.

#### **Problem solving activities:**

These activities challenge teams to work together to solve a problem or complete a task. Examples might include “Escape the Room” or “Mars Mission.”

#### **Outdoor activities:**

Getting team members out of the office can help them bond and have fun together. It can include a team hiking or camping trip, or a group outing to a ropes course or other adventure activity.

#### **Creative activities:**

Activities that encourage creativity and team members to think outside the box can be a lot of fun. This can be in the form of painting or art competitions, singing and dancing events etc.

It’s important to choose activities that are appropriate for your team and that align with your goals for employee engagement.

## #2 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Provide incentives for hard work

Incentives can be a powerful tool for motivating and engaging employees. Here are a few ideas for incentives that you might consider:

### **Monetary rewards:**

Bonuses, pay raises, and other financial incentives can be effective at motivating employees to work harder.

### **Time off:**

Offering additional vacation days or flexible work arrangements can be a powerful incentive for employees who value work-life balance.

### **Recognition:**

Publicly recognizing and praising employees for their hard work can be a powerful motivator. This can be as simple as a verbal acknowledgement in a team meeting or a written note of appreciation.

Transform your entire culture with a powerful recognition and rewards solution, Workmates, created by HR cloud that has spurred higher employee motivation levels in many organizations. Our solution is customizable and offers a unique set of advantages, as an ideal recognition solution. Workmates increases employee engagement and boosts productivity in the workplace.

### **Professional development opportunities:**

Providing employees with opportunities to learn new skills or advance their careers can be a highly motivating incentive. This might include training programs, mentorship opportunities, or professional certification courses.

### **Special perks:**

Offering small perks or privileges, such as a reserved parking spot or a choice of office location, can be a simple but effective way to show appreciation and encourage hard work.

You may also want to consider involving employees in the process of selecting incentives to ensure that they are well-received and effective.



### #3 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Encourage collaboration

Encouraging collaboration can be a powerful way to improve employee engagement and drive better outcomes for your business. Here are a few strategies you might consider:

#### **Encourage cross-functional collaboration:**

Encourage employees from different departments or teams to work together on projects or tasks. This can help break down silos and foster a sense of teamwork.

#### **Encourage open communication:**

Encourage employees to share ideas and feedback with one another, and create a culture where it's safe to speak up and share perspectives.

#### **Provide opportunities for team building:**

Host team building activities or outings that encourage employees to get to know one another and work together in a more relaxed setting.

#### **Foster a culture of teamwork:**

Encourage a culture of collaboration and teamwork by recognizing and rewarding team contributions and successes.

#### **Use collaboration tools:**

Utilize tools like project management software, virtual meeting platforms, and online collaboration spaces to make it easier for employees to work together and share ideas.

By fostering a culture of collaboration and encouraging open communication, you can help improve employee engagement and drive better outcomes for your business.

### #4 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Encourage open dialogue

Encouraging open dialogue can be a powerful way to improve employee engagement and foster a positive work culture. Here are a few strategies that can help your organization:

#### **Encourage employees to speak up:**

Create a culture where it's safe for employees to share their ideas, concerns, and

feedback. This might involve setting aside dedicated time for open discussions or establishing a suggestion box where employees can anonymously share ideas.

**Foster open communication channels:**

Encourage employees to communicate openly and honestly with one another and with management. This might involve creating dedicated channels for communication, such as a team chat platform or a suggestion forum.

**Encourage transparency:**

Be open and transparent with employees about company goals, plans, and challenges. This can help build trust and foster a sense of collaboration and teamwork.

**Provide opportunities for feedback:**

Regularly solicit feedback from employees and actively listen to their ideas and concerns. This might involve hosting team meetings or one-on-one conversations with employees.

**Lead by example:**

As a leader, model open and honest communication by being approachable and transparent in your own communication style.

By fostering a culture of open dialogue, you can help improve employee engagement and build a more positive and collaborative work environment.

**#5 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Provide opportunities for employee development**

Providing opportunities for employee development can be a powerful way to improve employee engagement and drive better outcomes for your business. Here are a few strategies you might consider:

**Offer training and development programs:**

Invest in training and development programs that help employees learn new skills or advance their careers. This might include workshops, seminars, or online courses.

**Encourage continuous learning:**

Encourage employees to take advantage of learning opportunities outside of formal

training programs. This might include attending industry conferences, participating in webinars, or taking online courses.

**Offer mentorship programs:**

Match employees with experienced mentors who can provide guidance and support as they learn and grow.

**Provide opportunities for career advancement:**

Offer opportunities for employees to take on new challenges and responsibilities, such as leading a team or taking on a new role within the organization.

**Encourage self-directed learning:**

Encourage employees to take ownership of their own development by providing them with resources and support to pursue their own learning goals.

By investing in employee development, you can help improve employee engagement and drive better outcomes for your business.

**#6 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Offer flexible hours**

Offering flexible work hours can be a powerful way to improve employee engagement and foster a positive work culture. Here are a few benefits of offering flexible hours:

**Improved work-life balance:**

Flexible work hours can help employees better balance their work and personal commitments, which can lead to increased job satisfaction and engagement.

**Increased productivity:**

Allowing employees to work at times that suit them best can lead to increased productivity, as they may be more focused and less distracted when working.

**Greater employee retention:**

Offering flexible work hours can help retain top talent, as employees may be more likely to stay with an organization that values their work-life balance.

### **Improved morale:**

Offering flexible work hours can help improve employee morale and foster a positive work culture, as employees may feel more valued and appreciated.

There are a few different ways you can offer flexible work hours, such as allowing employees to choose their own work schedule within certain parameters, offering flexible start and end times, or allowing employees to work remotely. It's important to consider the needs of your business and your employees when determining the best approach to flexible work hours.

## **#7 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Develop a comprehensive onboarding program**

Developing a comprehensive onboarding program can be a powerful way to improve employee engagement and support the success of new hires. A good onboarding program should:

Introduce new hires to the company's mission, values, and culture: Help new hires understand the company's purpose and how they fit into the organization.

### **Orient new hires to the organization:**

Provide an overview of the company's structure, processes, and systems.

### **Connect new hires with resources and support:**

Ensure that new hires have access to the resources and support they need to be successful, such as training materials, a mentor, or a go-to person for questions.

### **Provide opportunities for socialization:**

Help new hires get to know their coworkers and build relationships within the organization.

### **Set clear expectations:**

Communicate expectations around performance, attendance, and other aspects of the job.



### **Assess progress and provide feedback:**

Regularly check in with new hires to assess their progress and provide feedback to help them succeed.

Since 2012, HR Cloud® has continuously empowered individuals and groups to improve their respective companies. Our comprehensive onboarding program can help new hires feel welcomed, supported, and engaged in their work, which can lead to better outcomes for the company. It has always been our mission to create a collaborative and encouraging atmosphere for everyone and we have achieved great success for our customers from a diverse range of sectors.

## **#8 Employee Engagement Strategy (Bonus) – Utilize HR software**

Utilizing HR software can be a powerful way to improve employee engagement and streamline HR processes. Here are a few ways that HR software can support employee engagement:

### **Streamline HR processes:**

HR software can help automate and streamline HR processes, such as payroll, benefits management, and time and attendance tracking. This can help reduce administrative burden for HR staff and free up more time for engagement and development efforts.

### **Foster communication and collaboration:**

Many HR software platforms offer features such as team chat, task management, and document sharing, which can help facilitate communication and collaboration among employees.

### **Provide access to self-service tools:**

HR software can provide employees with access to self-service tools, such as a portal for viewing and updating personal information or requesting time off. This can help empower employees and improve their overall experience with HR.

### **Facilitate goal setting and tracking:**

Some HR software platforms offer tools for setting and tracking performance goals, which can help employees stay focused and motivated.

Support employee development: Many HR software platforms offer features such as learning management systems, which can help employees access training materials and track their progress.

HR Cloud® software is a cutting-edge software and a valuable tool for improving employee engagement and streamlining HR processes. It's important to choose a software platform like HR Cloud®, that meets the holistic needs of your organization and your employees. Right from recruitment to onboarding, boosting productivity, career advancement, employee retention, employee engagement and recognition, our one-of-its-kind HR cloud solution has created remarkable success stories for customers all over.



# The Ultimate Guide to Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is crucial for a business. It increases productivity, boosts innovation, increases retention, and brings a good name for your organization.

It is also said that employees who do not feel adequately recognized face a lower engagement. They are twice as likely to leave their job in the next year.

However, there are so many features to tracking employee engagement and strategies for improving employee engagement, especially for remote teams.

So if you are confused about where to start, here is the ultimate guide to employee engagement.

## Hire with employee engagement in mind

The decisions you make while hiring can lead to different results in the engagement of an individual employee as well as workforce engagement across the organization.

Every new hire you make has the possibility to impact how employees interact with each other, either strengthening the values of your organization or detracting from the work culture.

A successful hire occurs when a new employee aligns with the organization in many different aspects, including job details as well as the company's overall culture.

### **Salary:**

Your new employee's salary expectations should match what the company can unfailingly offer.

### **Values:**

Your new hire should respect how the organization operates to attain its goals.

### **Competency:**

The new hire should have the skills to meet the responsibilities demanded by the position.

## Leverage onboarding tools and employee training

Your new hires are only learning to navigate the complexity and will need assistance in specific areas.

Thus, your first step should be to understand their viewpoint and work towards offering an onboarding experience that will keep them engaged.

According to a survey, 43% of new hires leave their jobs in the first 90 days as they felt that the role described during the process of hiring wasn't what they experienced when they begin to work.

Another statistic suggests that organizations that offer inadequate onboarding programs have twice more chances of facing employee turnover.

This goes to show just how essential user onboarding can be!

The first impression is crucial and will have a significant impact on new employees' expectations. However, first impressions don't stop after new hires accept an offer.

Your newest employees will evaluate their experience more carefully during the initial few weeks with your business. If you are able to provide what you promised during the hiring process, it will deepen that initial good impression and make way for employee engagement.

So while onboarding requires several different tasks for compliance, you should not overlook the training and relationship building that will set a pattern of employee engagement from the start.

Consider using Whatfix's on-demand employee training in-app to train your employees in real time. The interactive on-the-job eLearning solution enhances your training by aiding employees in their entire learning process while working.

## Work on professionally developing your employees

If statistics are anything to go by, more than 70% of high-retention-risk employees will leave a company if they see no future progress in the present job.

If your employees feel that you don't care about their professional development, they may see themselves as a denigrating asset.



Ask yourself why you value your employees. Is it for what they are offering right now, or you value them for what they can become while they work with you? If you are able to align your organization's growth opportunities with the factors that motivate employees, it will increase employee engagement.

Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs elucidates different human motivation that starts with physical needs at the bottom that extend to self-actualization at the highest level.

Though the needs at the bottom take priority over the needs at the top, when you fulfill the needs at the top, it brings more satisfaction.

### **Improve retention with employee engagement**

It has been seen time and again that regular communication between managers and employees have assisted in developing engaged employees. Another chance to help you continue this effective communication, allowing managers, employees, and leadership to offer authentic feedback and learn from each other is the exit interview process.

You should take action wherever necessary. Even when the economy is thriving, if there is an incompetent employee, you shouldn't hesitate to replace him or her.

Employee engagement doesn't blend with employee disengagement. If an employee is not showing any signs of improving their performance or making desirable changes, you can dismiss them while defending the other employees on that team.

To engage departing employees, you should offer appropriate transparency. Your employees will have their own reason why they depart. The appropriate details provided by the team members when they depart can aid the rest of the employees to process the change without making cynical guesswork.

Apart from that, recognize your employees' reasons why they are leaving voluntarily. When you understand and categorize the reasons employees leave, it will help your organization to improve.

If any engaged employees are leaving voluntarily, stay connected with them. You can consider curating alumni networks to be in contact with past employees. It will give you access to expanded networking and employment opportunities.

Plus, it might make some employees come back to your organization with new skills and experiences in case a new position opens up.

## Conduct best employee survey practices

As per 90% of workers, they are more likely to stay at an organization that takes and acts on feedback.

Learn what matters to employees most by conducting a survey of them. Your chief goal of surveying your employees should be to start a discussion and understand what will increase the level of personal investment at work.

Conduct the survey in such a way that it will yield the most thoughtful, timely responses. The catch here is to keep the surveys short and conduct frequent pulse surveys.

Conducting short but regular surveys work better rather than conducting long and irregular surveys for both employees and employers. It is because the fewer number of questions let employees think properly and reply at a higher rate.

Additionally, it's a great idea to build a habit of transparency and share the results. Sharing all the data collected from surveys will demonstrate transparency and help you to engage employees.

There you have it— the ultimate five tips to help you engage your employee. Following this guide will help you to engage your employee and retain them. Employee engagement will open doors for performance growth within organizations. It can increase productivity, boost innovation, increase employee retention, and boost the reputation of your organization.

You can't build employee engagement in one day. But if you work on engaging your employees, you will find different benefits throughout the lifecycle of the employee, both for the employee and the organization.

## How to Get Started

This is where most get stuck.

The best way to get started is to identify where you stand. Get a meeting with the managers and the employees. Identify what the current employee engagement rate is.

Invest in proper employee engagement software ([Workmates](#), for example) to make the entire process easier. This platform is your perfect starting point in putting these employee engagement strategies into action.

If you are hiring new employees this season, here is a bonus, FREE report—[“The New Hire Orientation Process What To Do & Where To Start”](#)—that details the ideal onboarding process for new hires.



# Empower Engagement

Give your greatest asset the tools to connect, engage, and communicate simply with Workmates by HR Cloud®