

4 priority areas for modern employee engagement

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Employee engagement remains an ongoing challenge for leaders around the world. 42% of HR leaders say improving employee experience is their [top challenge](#) today.

And while [employee engagement rates are on the rise](#) according to Gallup, a global pandemic has thrown a whole new set of challenges our way when it comes to engaging our workforce.

Remote working situations, team restructures, shifting responsibilities, and an undercurrent of uncertainty has changed work as we know it, and as a result our peoples' needs, preferences and expectations have shifted.

Josh Bersin calls this "The Big Reset".

"There are hundreds of reinventions going on. Companies are dramatically changing how they hire and move people internally. They're radically upskilling and reskilling leaders. They're pouring money into learning and development. And they're totally rethinking their diversity, inclusion, and citizenship programs," Bersin says in his [latest report](#).

Amid these changes, it's clear that delivering an exceptional employee experience, underpinned by reliable and intuitive technology, is more important than ever.

In fact, it's an area that is on top of HR leaders' agendas, with [48% of HR and IT Leaders](#) planning on investing in technology to help improve the employee experience.

Employee engagement in the new world of work

As challenging as this pandemic has been, it's presented HR leaders with a valuable opportunity to re-evaluate ways of working. Many are looking at new ways to use digital systems to redesign the employee experience.

Here are 4 key areas HR teams can focus on to improve employee engagement in their organisations today.

1. Prioritise wellbeing

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a huge toll on people's financial, physical and emotional wellbeing.

But wellbeing goes beyond lunchtime yoga sessions and chill-out zones, it's all about emotional intelligence (EI). EI is one of the most critical skills managers need to be equipped with right now, and it's up to employers to build these skills to protect the wellbeing of their people.

[Research among 1160 workers](#) shows wellbeing is a key priority for workers, with 83% saying it is up to the employer to facilitate wellbeing in the workplace.

Equip managers with the tools and strategies to identify signs of struggle, and encourage them to have regular check-ins to monitor their team's wellbeing.

More broadly, wellbeing is about creating conditions that inspire and enable people to invest their talent and ideas in your company's future success.

What makes people go above and beyond in their work? It starts with great leadership and is influenced daily by how well you reward, recognise and develop your team members.

2. Stay connected remotely

The modern workforce is operating in a time of uncertainty. Right now many organisations are preparing for a return back to work or implementing hybrid working models to support a mix of in-person and remote working arrangements.

Now more than ever, it's important that leaders take the time to find out how their employees are going, provide direction, help them with any challenges or barriers they may be experiencing, determine what support they require, and give meaningful feedback and positive reinforcement.

Empower your leaders throughout your organisation to informally check-in with their teams regularly.

This includes frequent (daily or weekly) communications, all-hands meetings, and regular surveys and feedback. Even if this was happening in your organisation pre-pandemic, these activities need to be made top priority going forward.

Choosing a modern HR solution that is built with easy-to-use collaboration and communication features will help you equip your managers with the tools they need to stay connected, wherever your team may be.

3. Provide personalised learning and development opportunities

Faced with more free time due to lockdown rules, many people have thrown themselves into learning about digital tools, professional topics, and new languages. According to [data from LinkedIn Learning](#), users watched over 1.7 million hours of courses in April 2020, double the amount watched in March and three-times the amount watched in February.

Many organisations have noted this growing enthusiasm and are taking advantage of the increase in virtual learning technologies to reskill and up-skill their workforce.

An HR platform that integrates training with performance management allows you to use key data insights to align training programs with employees' goals, giving them a personalised and engaging experience.

But don't forget the human element in learning says [Josh Bersin](#).

"Today people need more contact, not more content. Therefore, it's important to complement online learning with some kind of interaction and collaboration."

4. Give people the tools to make work easier

As if working from home while juggling home school responsibilities and sticky-handed toddlers weren't hard enough, many of us also battle with slow, onerous and unreliable systems.

Not having access to the right tools and technology adds to the frustration and inertia many employees already feel. It makes it harder to get tasks done, which detracts from an employee's sense of progress and achievement.

More than a third of employees feel their job is [harder than it should be because of outdated processes and legacy technology](#), based on a worldwide survey by human capital think-tank The Workforce Institute.

A unified HR platform that enables employee self-service makes more flexible and efficient workflows possible. Your team can see and manage their own leave, training, and career development information, and easily find important forms or pay details.

Giving your employees access to cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) solutions also enhance employee experience through user-friendly interfaces, mobility, and seamless integrations with essentials like Office 365. Employees can work from anywhere with an internet connection, and maintain a sense of belonging and eagerness.

A unified approach to employee experience

If there's been any positive to come out of the pandemic it's the sense of unity that has been created. Unity among our workforce but also among customers and across all corporate functions.

As Josh Bersin puts it, "In many ways, the pandemic forced us to tear down our functional silos and work more closely together than ever before. People are inspired and energised by the sense of purpose, togetherness, and urgency in this time of change."

HR leaders can build on this sense of unity through an integrated human resource management solution that provides an exceptional employee experience across the entire employee lifecycle. Backed by modern technology, you can build a great culture that supports your people to deliver their best, wherever they are located.